J. Johnson dedit Avis 1742

THE MEASURES OF Christian Obedience, OR, A DISCOURSE

SHEWING

What Obedience is Indiſpenſably Neceſſary to a Regenerate State, and what Defects are conſiſtent with it;

FOR

The Promotion of Piety, and the Peace of Troubled Conſciences.

By *JOHN KETTLEWELL*, Vicar of COLES-HILL in *Warwick-ſhire*.

The Second Edition.

LONDON,

Printed for *Thomas Chapman* at the *Chyrurgeons Arms* over againſt the upper *Mews-gate* near *Charing-croſs*, 1687.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
AND
RIGHT REVEREND
FATHER in GOD,
HENRY
LORD BISHOP of LONDON,
And One of His Majesties Most Honourable Privy-Council, &c.

MY LORD,

HAving published this Treatise to promote, as much as in me lies, an intire Practice of our Blessed Saviours Precepts, and a comfortable expectation of his Rewards amongst us; I have presumed to address it to Your Lordship, hoping it will find Acceptance in Your Pious Judgment for

the ſake of thoſe things which are contained in it, and becauſe Your Lordſhip is a moſt eminent Example as a Chriſtian, *and a moſt diſcreetly zealous and diligent Promoter as a* Biſhop *of the Subject of it.*

In this Work my Great Deſign has been to preſs men to a conſcientious regard of their whole Duty, and to ſhow them how much contentment, and cheerfulneſs of Spirit they have reaſon to enjoy in the careful obſervance of it. And theſe are ends ſo excellent, as may well excuſe the imperfections of any honeſt Endeavours, which ſhall be put forth in order to them. For what greater ſervice can be done to our Bleſſed Lord, than to exalt his Authority in the hearts and lives of all his Followers? What greater honour can be brought to Religion, than to promote a pious practice, and thereupon a conſtant joy and cheerfulneſs in the minds of all its Profeſſors? And what

what more faithful kindneſs can be ſhown to the Souls of Men, than clearly to lay before them, and moſt earneſtly to preſs upon them ſuch things, as will give them peace and comfortable expectations of God's love and favour in this World, and ſecure their eternal happineſs in that which is to come? And ſince I have directed all the Parts, and every thing that I have ſaid in the following Diſcourſe, to theſe ends; I am willing to hope, that, notwithſtanding all its defects, I have therein done no unacceptable ſervice to my Saviour, and to all good men, who will be much readier to encourage any honeſt tendencies to this purpoſe, than to reprove, and throw them by, for the ſake of thoſe weakneſſes, and that want of skill, which ſhall be found in them.

In this hope, my Lord, I make bold to Preſent it to Your Lordſhip, whoſe great and moſt exemplary Virtue will not, I believe, be averſe from Patronizing

that,

that, which tends even in a low degree to further and promote it. I pray God preſerve Your Lordſhip, and continue You, what You now are, an Illuſtrious Pattern of all Private and Political Virtues to this Your Native Country. That Religion may ſtill be adorned, and this diſtreſſed Church ſupported, by that exemplarineſs of an upright Converſation, that great Prudence, and unwearied Diligence, and undaunted Courage, and moſt wiſe and ſteady Zeal, which Your Lordſhip has always ſhown in Your High Station for the things of God committed to Your Care, and which have rendred You greatly ſerviceable to Your Saviour, and a moſt valuable Bleſſing to this poor Church and Nation. This, my Lord, is the moſt hearty Prayer of,

Your Lordſhips

in all humble, and
dutiful Obſervance,

JOHN KETTLEWELL.

THE PREFACE.

READER,

THE deſign of this enſuing Treatiſe is to encreaſe the *piety*, and promote the *peace* of all ſincerely honeſt Conſciences, by ſtating plainly and fully what are the *terms indiſpenſably required of all Chriſtian men to their eternal pardon and ſalvation.*

In this I have endeavoured to be as clear, and particular as poſſibly I could. For I write upon a Subject wherein all men are infinitely concerned; and therefore I have ſtudied to write ſo, as all might underſtand me. I have carried on my Diſcourſe all along, with a particular eye to the benefit of the *plain* and *unlearned* Reader, and ſuited things, as far as their nature would bear, and my skill would reach, to *ordinary* and *vulgar* apprehenſions. And that they might have nothing to hinder or offend them in their progreſs, I have been induſtriouſly careful, through the Body of the whole Book,

Book, to inſert nothing of the *learned languages*; but whereſoever any thing of that ſeemed fit to be added for the ſake of others, I have preſerved the *Text* unmixt, and caſt it into the *Margine*. In the whole Work, my ſtudy has been to ſpeak things *uſeful* and *neceſſary* to be known, that the weight and worth of the matter might purchaſe a favourable cenſure for all the defects of Art, which ſhall be found in the compoſure.

By what I have here offered upon this Subject, I doubt not but it will appear, that although our *Religion* is moſt *ſtrictly pure*, and *nobly virtuous*; yet it is by no means *melancholy*, or apt in its *own nature* to engender *tormenting fears* and *endleſs ſcruples*. For the *Terms of pardon* and ſalvation are no *intricate* or *uncertain*, but a *fixt* and *eaſie* thing: They are neither over-hard for our *active powers*, nor dark and inevident to our *underſtandings*: ſo that by the aſſiſtance of God's Grace we may *perform* them, and be very well *aſſured* of it when we do. God exacts an *honeſt*, but not an *unerring* obedience; he bears with our *weakneſſes*, though not with our *wilful failings*. And this is ground enough whereupon to *ſecure peace*, and yet in no wiſe to *ſupplant piety*: ſince although our Religion is ſo exactly holy, as utterly to daſh all wicked mens

preſuming

preſuming hopes; yet is it ſo indulgent ſtill, as to tempt no man, who is honeſtly obedient, to deſpair.

In purſuit of this Argument *what piety is indiſpenſably required*, and *what failings ſhall be indulged*, that men may know when to *hope* and when to *fear*, and neither foſter a peace without piety, nor phanſie ſuch a rigour in piety as leaves no room for peace, I have proceeded as *particularly* and *perſpicuouſly* as poſſibly I could: being unwilling in a matter of this importance to leave my Reader, either in *doubt*, by an account which is too *general* and *ambiguous*; or in *darkneſs*, by ſuch as is *obſcure*. And to give a proſpect of the whole buſineſs, I have laid things down in this order in *five* Books.

In the *firſt* Book I have ſhewn *what the condition of happineſs* is in *general*; viz. *our obedience to the Laws of the Goſpel*, it being that whereby at the laſt Day we muſt all be judged to live eternally. And becauſe ſome are tempted to think obedience needleſs when they read of pardon and happineſs promiſed to other things, as *Faith*, *Repentance*, &c. I have ſhewn particularly of thoſe Speeches that they are *metonymical*, and that life and mercy are not promiſed to them as they are ſeparate from obedience, but only as they effect and imply it. 1st Book

But *obedience* being a *general* word, and mens great backwardneſs to it rendring them very ſlow to run it out into all thoſe *Particulars* which are contained in it: to bring this Diſcourſe yet *nearer*, and ſet it *home* upon their *Conſciences*, I proceed in the *ſecond* Book to ſhow *what thoſe Laws are in particular which we are bound to obey*, what is *the nature of thoſe ſeveral virtues and vices which are enjoined or forbidden by them*; and from *what expectations, and under what forfeitures we are bound to obey them.* This indeed I found to be a toilſome work, and the moſt tedious part of this whole enquiry: but I thought it extreamly needful to a *thorow piety*, and a *well-grounded peace*, and that made me that I would not paſs it over. For in the buſineſs of *Duty* and *Obedience*, men will ordinarily go no further than they needs muſt, but ſtand their ground, and diſpute it out ſo long as they have any poſt in reſerve to which they can ſtill retreat. Firſt, *They do not believe that this* or *that particular virtue*, which is urged upon them, *is a Law of God*; or, if they are forced to believe that, *they think it is not ſo neceſſary, that Heaven and eternal life ſhould depend upon it*; or if at laſt they are made to ſee that too, yet ſtill *they are in ignorance* or *errour about the nature of it*; and ſo have *no ſenſe of guilt*, or *remorſe of mind* when they

2 Book

they *tranſgreſs* and *act againſt* it. And therefore to make every *particular* Law have a full force upon them, both its *nature*, and *neceſſity* muſt be evidently laid before them. They muſt be ſhewed what that is which it requires, and under what penalties it requires it. And then their Conſciences are awakened, and their fears are raiſed, and ſo the Law is ſet in its full force to oblige them to its performance. Thus neceſſary is ſuch a particular Diſcourſe upon the ſeveral Laws of God and Inſtances of Duty, to a *pious performance* of them; and it is no leſs neceſſary to a *peaceable aſſurance* in them that do. For unleſs a man knows the ſeveral inſtances of Duty, and underſtands what is meant by them; he cannot diſcern when he keeps, or when he breaks them, and ſo can have no comfort, or promiſe himſelf any reward upon his performance of them.

In the *third* Book I proceed to ſhew *what ſort of obedience is indiſpenſably required of us to all the particular Laws*, which are deſcribed in the *Second*. And the neceſſary qualifications of it I reduce to *two*; viz. *ſincerity*, and *integrity*. In diſcourſing upon which I endeavour to ſet out all the *Parts*, and ſtate the *juſt bounds* of this obedience; and to examine thoſe *pretences*, and confute thoſe *falſe grounds*, whereby men, who

are unwilling to perform it, ſeek to evade, or undermine it.

And having in the *three* firſt Books proceeded thus far in aſſerting the neceſſity, and ſetting out the true compaſs and juſt extent of *piety*; I go on to conſult more directly the intereſts of *peace* in thoſe *two* that follow.

4th Book

In the *fourth* Book I ſhew *what defects are conſiſtent with that indiſpenſable pitch of piety before deſcribed*, and *what deſtroy it*. And this being a Point whereupon the peace of Conſciences ſo nearly depends, I have been *particular* in the *explication* of it, and *large* in the *proof*. Thoſe ſins which are *inconſiſtent* with it, and *deſtroy a ſtate of Grace*, are ſuch as are *voluntary* and *wilful*: whereof ſome only *deſtroy the ſtate of acceptance for the preſent*; but others either *greatly wound*, or *utterly extinguiſh that habitual Virtue which ſhould reſtore us to it for the time to come*. But others there are which are *allowed by it*, and *do not overthrow* it; *viz. all ſuch defects as are involuntary*, whether they be ſins of *innocent unwilled ignorance*, or *inconſideration*. In diſcourſing whereupon, as I have been ſtudious to explain them ſo *particularly*, that no *honeſt heart* might fall into *fears* and *doubts* about them; ſo have I been careful withal to add ſuch *marks* and *limitations* to them, that no *wilfully ignorant*, or *inconſiderate* Sinners

Sinners may take encouragement thence to presume.

In the *fifth* Book I shew *what is the remedy for all sin*, and the Gospel-instrument of reconciliation; that so when at any time men are possessed with just fears, by being fallen into real danger, they may again be restored to peace in their own minds, by being first restored to Gods pardon. And having proceeded thus far in shewing what *measures and degrees of piety God will exact of us*, what *failings he will connive at in us*, and *upon what terms*, when once we have offended him, *he will be reconciled again to us*: I have gone in the last place to *remove several causeless grounds of scruple*, which make good men fear where no fear is, and condemn themselves when God will graciously acquit them. 5th Book

These are the matters treated on in the ensuing Discourse, which was at first drawn up to serve the spiritual necessities of a *truly pious soul*, and which I have now sent abroad into the world, being made to believe it will not be altogether unserviceable to the Publick. If thereby I may promote the great end of my *Lord* and *Saviour*, in contributing to the *growth of piety*, and the *peace of Consciences*; I shall think my self most happy in having been a Furtherer, though in a low degree, of so noble and excellent

cellent a Deſign. But whatever the ſucceſs in that be, I am ſure I ſhall have the reward of a *religious Deſign*, and an *honeſt endeavour*, from him who eſtimates our *pains*, not by their *events*, which are not in our *own power*, but by their *natural tendency*, and our *intentions*, which are. In which confidence I ſend it out into the world, depending upon his Grace to ſet it home upon the Conſcience, and make it effectual to guide the practice, and ſecure the comfort both of thee and me. For which end I hope I ſhall have the hearty prayers of all good men, eſpecially of thoſe, if any ſuch there be, who ſhall receive benefit by this Treatiſe.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

The INTRODUCTION.

The Contents.

Religious men inquisitive after their future state. Three Articles of Christian belief cause such inquisitiveness. The Articles of Eternal Life, and the Resurrection, make men desire satisfaction. The Article of the last Judgement encourages the search, and points out a way towards it. A proposal of the present Design, and the matters treated of in the ensuing Discourse. page 1.

BOOK I.

Of the indispensable Condition of happiness in the general.

CHAP. I.

Of Obedience, the general Condition of happiness.

The Contents.

Obedience the indispensable Condition of happiness. The Laws of the Gospel are given as a Rule to it. The Promises are all upon condition of it, and intended to encourage it. All the threatnings are now denounced, and will be executed upon the disobedient. Of those other things whereto pardon is promised, as well as to Obedience. Of Metonymy's. Of the Principles of humane actions. Of Principles of Obedience. All those speeches metonymical, where Obedience is not expres'd, and yet pardon is promised. p 8.

CHAP. II.

Of pardon promised to Faith, Knowledge, and being in Christ.

The

The Contents.

Of pardon and happineſs promiſed to Faith and Knowledge. Of the nature of Faith in general. Of natural Jewiſh, and Chriſtian Faith. Of this laſt as juſtifying and ſaving. Of the fitneſs of Chriſtian Faith and Knowledge to produce Obedience. Pardon promiſed to them no further than they are productive of it. Of pardon promiſed to being in Chriſt. Chriſt ſometimes ſignifies the Chriſtian Religion, ſometimes the Chriſtian Church. Being in Chriſt, is being of Chriſt's Religion, or a Member of Chriſt's Church. The fitneſs of theſe to effect Obedience. Pardon promiſed to them no further than they do. 20

CHAP. III.

Of pardon promiſed to Repentance.

The Contents.

Of pardon promiſed to Repentance, Regeneration, a New Nature, a New Creature. The nature of Repentance, it includes amendment and Obedience. The nature of Regeneration and a New Creature. Its fitneſs to produce Obedience. Some mens repentance ineffectual. The folly of it. Pardon promiſed to Repentance and Regeneration no further than they effect Obedience. In the caſe of dying Penitents a change of mind accepted without a change of practice. That only where God ſees a change of practice would enſue upon it. This would ſeldom happen upon death-bed reſolutions and repentance. The general ineffectiveneſs of this ſhown by experience. Two reaſons of it. 1. Becauſe it proceeds ordinarily upon an inconſtant temporary Principle, viz. nearneſs of Death, and preſent fears of it. Though it always begins there, yet ſometimes it grows up upon a Principle that is more laſting; viz. a conviction of the abſolute neceſſity of Heaven and a Holy Life. 2. Becauſe it is ordinarily in a weak and incompetent degree. All TRUE reſolution is not able to reform men. Sick-bed reſolutions generally unable. Such ineffective reſolutions unavailing to mens pardon. 34

CHAP. IV.

Of pardon promiſed to confeſſion of Sins, and to Converſion.

The Contents.

Of pardon promiſed to confeſſion of ſins. The nature and qualifications of a ſaving Confeſſion. It's fitneſs to make us forſake ſin. The ineffectiveneſs of moſt mens confeſſions. The folly and impiety of it. Pardon promiſed to confeſſion no further than it produces Obedience. Of pardon promiſed to converſion. The nature of converſion. It includes Obedience, and is but another name for it. 55

CHAP.

CHAP. V.
Of pardon promiſed to Prayer.

The Contents.

Of pardon promiſed to Prayer. Of the influence which our Prayers have upon our Obedience. Of the preſumption or idleneſs of moſt mens prayers. Of the impudence, hypocriſie, and uſeleſneſs of ſuch Petitions. Then our prayers are heard, when they are according to Gods will: when we pray for pardon in Repentance, and for ſtrength and aſſiſtance in the uſe of our own endeavours. Pardon promiſed to Prayer no further than it effects this Obedience, and penitential endeavour. 64

CHAP. VI.
Of pardon promiſed to our fear of God, and truſt in him.

The Contents.

Of pardon promiſed to our fear of God, and truſt in him, Of the influence which mens fears have upon their endeavours, and how thy carry on ignorant minds into ſuperſtition, but well informed judgments to obedience. Of the influence of mens truſt in God upon their obedience. The ineffectiveneſs of moſt mens truſt. Of the preſumption and infidelity of ſuch confidence. That pardon is promiſed to fear and truſt ſo far only as we obey with them. 76

CHAP. VII.
Of pardon promiſed to the love of God, and of our Neighbour.

The Contents.

Of pardon promiſed to the love of God, and of our Neighbour. Of the fitneſs of an univerſal love to produce an univerſal obedience. That pardon is promiſed to it for this reaſon. The Concluſion. 85

BOOK II.
Of the Laws of the Goſpel, which are the Rule of this Obedience in particular.

CHAP. I.
Of the particular Laws comprehened under the Duty of Sobriety.

The Contents.

A Diviſion of our Duty into three general Vertues, Piety, Sobriety, Righteouſneſs. Of the nature of Sobriety. The particular Laws commanding, and prohibiting under this firſt Member. A larger explication of the nature of Mortification. 94

CHAP. II.
Of LOVE the Epitome of Duty towards God and men, and of the particular Laws comprehended under Piety towards God.

The Contents.

Of the Duties of Piety and Righteouſneſs, both comprehended in one general Duty, LOVE. *It the Epitome of our Duty. The great happineſs of a good nature. The kind temper of the Chriſtian Religion. Of the effects of* LOVE. *The great Duty to God is Honour. The outward expreſſion whereof is Worſhip. The great offence is diſhonour. Of the ſeveral Duties and tranſgreſſions contained under both.* 106

CHAP. III.
Of the particular Duties contained under Juſtice, and Charity.

The Contents.

Of the particular Duties contained under Juſtice, and Charity. Both are only expreſſions of Love, which is the fulfilling of the Law. Of the particular ſins againſt both. Of ſcandal. Of the combination of Juſtice and Charity in a ſtate that reſults from both, viz. *peace. Of the ſeveral Duties comprehended under it. Of the particular ſins reducible to unpeaceableneſs. Of the latitude of the word Neighbour, to whom all theſe dutiful expreſſions are due. Its narrowneſs in the* Jewiſh *ſenſe. Its univerſality in the Chriſtian.* 114

CHAP. IV.
Of our Duties to men in particular Relations.

The Contents.

Of our Duties to other men in particular Relations. The Duties enjoined, and the ſins prohibited towards Kings and Princes, Biſhops, and other Miniſters. The particular Duties and ſins in the relation of Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Brethren and Siſters, Maſters and Servants. Of the two Sacraments, and Repentance. A recital of all particular Duties enjoined, and ſins prohibited to Chriſtians. Of the harmleſneſs of a defective enumeration, the Duties of the Goſpel being ſuggeſted not only outwardly in Books, but inwardly by mens own paſſions and conſciences. 134

CHAP. V.
Of the Sanction of the foregoing Laws.

The Contents.

Of the Sanction of all the forementioned particular Laws. That they are bound upon us by our hopes of Heaven, and our fears of Hell. Of the Sanction of all the particular affirmative or commanding Laws. 163

CHAP. VI.
Of the Sanction of all the forbidding Laws.

The Contents.

Of the Sanction of all the negative or forbididding Laws particularly. The perfection of the Chriſtian Law. How our Duty exceeds that of the Heathens

thens under the revelations of Nature. And that of the Jews *under the additional light of* Moſes's *Law.* 190

BOOK III.

What degrees and manner of Obedience is required to all the Laws foremention'd.

CHAP. I.
Of Sincerity.

The Contents.

THE firſt qualification of an acceptable obedience, that it be ſincere. Two things implied in ſincerity, truth or undiſſembledneſs, and purity or unmixedneſs of our ſervice. Of the firſt Notion of ſincerity, as oppoſite to hypocriſie, or doing what God commands out of a real intention and deſign to ſerve him. Of a two-fold intention, actual and expreſs; or habitual and implicite. Of intention in general, and of theſe two in particular. Where an actual intention is neceſſary, and where an habitual is ſufficient to our Obedience. Of the ſecond Notion of ſincerity, as it notes purity of our ſervice in oppoſition to mixture and corrupt alloy. This Point ſtated, viz. *What intention of our own good together with Gods ſervice is conſiſtent with an acceptable and ſincere Obedience, and what deſtroys it. Integrity of our Obedience a ſure mark whereby to judge whether it be ſincere or no.* 211

CHAP. II.
Of the ſecond qualification of all acceptable obedience, *viz.* integrity.

The Contents.

Of the ſecond qualification of an acceptable Obedience, viz. *integrity. The Notion of integrity or uprightneſs. A three-fold integrity. Of the integrity of our powers and faculties. Or of the Obedience with our minds, affections, wills, and bodily powers. How God is to be obeyed with the firſt faculty, our minds or underſtandings. God is to be obeyed with the ſecond faculty, our affections. This Queſtion ſtated. How God and his Laws, which are ſpiritual things, are proportionate Objects for our love and affections, which are bodily faculties. Of the difference betwixt our love of God, and of the World: that this is more warm and ſenſible; that more laſting and powerful. An account of what meaſures of Obedience in our minds and affections, is neceſſary to the acceptance of our ſervice. That contrivances and conſultations for evil things, and ſuch mere apprehenſions as are particularly forbidden, are deadly and damning: but that all other bare apprehenſions; and that all our affections after good or evil things will be rewarded or*

punished, not merely for themselves, but only as they are Causes and Principles of good or evil choice and practice. God to be obeyed with the third faculty, our wills. He cannot be served without them. Men are guilty of sin if they chuse it and consent to it, though they cannot act it. All this service of our inward faculties is in order to our outward works and operations. 240

CHAP. III.

Of Obedience with the fourth faculty, *viz.* our executive or bodily powers, and outward operations.

The Contents.

God is to be obeyed with the fourth faculty, viz. *our executive or bodily powers, and outward operations. The great difficulty of Obedience in this instance. Four false grounds whereupon men shift off the necessity of this service with their works and actions. First, A hope to be saved for a true belief or orthodox opinions. Mens confidence in this represented. The folly of it. Orthodox Faith and Professions no further available, than they produce obedient works and actions. Secondly, A hope of salvation upon an Obedience of idle desires and ineffective wishes. An opinion of some Casuists, That a desire of Grace is Grace, refuted. This stated, and a distinct explication of what is promised to the desire of Obedience, and what to Obedience it self. The pretence for this acceptance of idle desires from* Gal. 5. 17. *considered. An account when the will and desire is taken for the deed and performance. That Text* 2 Cor. 8. 11, 12. *plainly vindicated. Thirdly, A hope of being saved notwithstanding they do sin, because they are insnared into it through the strength of temptations. The folly of this. Our own lusts make temptations strong. The Grace of the Gospel is sufficient to overcome them. Fourthly, A hope of being excused because they transgress with an unwilling mind. These mens state represented. Unwillingness in sin a mitigation, but no sufficient excuse. Some strugling in most actions both of good and bad men. The strife of the Flesh and Spirit. Two sorts of men feel nothing of it,* viz. *the Saints in Heaven after the Resurrection, and some profligate Sinners here now on Earth. All good men, and the generality of evil are subject to it in this life. Mens peremptory will and last choice determines their condition.* 259

CHAP. IV.

A further pursuit of this last ground of shifting off the obedience of our actions, in an Exposition of the *seventh* Chapter to the *Romans.*

The Contents.

A further pursuit of this last ground of false confidence. The Plea for it from Rom. 7. *represented. This refuted.*

refuted. A Metaſchematiſm uſual with Saint Paul, *in an odious Topick. The Apoſtle ſhown not to ſpeake of himſelf in that Chapter, becauſe of ſeveral things there ſpoken which are not truly applicable to him. This evidenced in ſundry inſtances. Nor to have ſpoken in the perſon of any regenerate man, which is proved by the ſame reaſon, and manifeſted in ſundry Particulars. But to have perſonated a ſtrugling, but as yet unregenerated* Jew *who had no further aſſiſtance againſt his luſts, but the weak and ineffective Law of* Moſes. *This ſhown from the order and deſign of that Chapter. This whole matter repreſented in a Paraphraſe upon the ſeventh Chapter, with part of the ſixth and the eighth. Two Reaſons of the inability of* Moſes's *Law to make men wholly obedient; and the perfection, as to them, of the Law of Chriſt,* viz. Firſt, *The promiſe of eternal life.* Secondly, *The promiſe of the Spirit. Both theſe were wanting in the Law; and are moſt clearly ſupplied in the Goſpel. The* Jews *had the aſſiſtance of the Spirit, not by vertue of any Article in their Law; but by the gracious Covenant of the Goſpel, which has been confirmed with the world ever ſince* Adam. *The Law mentioned in Scripture as a weak, and mean inſtrument upon the account of theſe defects. This weakneſs of the Law, ſet off particularly in this ſeventh to the* Romans. *No hopes to any man who acts ſin from this Chapter; but plain declarations of then eceſſity of a working obedience ſhown in ſeveral expreſſions of it to that purpoſe. A proof of the neceſſity of this fourth part of integrity, the obedience of our executive powers in our works and actions; and the inſignificancy of all the reſt when it is wanting.* 283

CHAP. V.

Of the ſecond ſort of integrity, an integrity of times and ſeaſons.

The Contents.

Of the ſecond ſort of integrity, viz. *that of times and ſeaſons. Of the unconſtancy of many mens obedienec. Perſeverance neceſſary unto bliſs. The deſperate caſe of Apoſtates, both as to the difficulty of their recovery from ſin, and the greatneſs of their puniſhment,* 325

CHAP. VI.

Of the third ſort of integrity, *viz.* that of the object; or of obedience to all the particular Laws and parts of Duty.

The Contents.

Of the partiality of mens Obedience from their love of ſome particular ſins. There pretences whereby they juſtifie the allowed practice of ſome ſins, whilſt they are obedient in ſome other inſtances. The firſt pretence is the preſervation of their Religion and themſelves in times of perſecution. A particular account of mens diſobedience under this pretence. The vani-

ty of it ſhown from the following conſiderations. Religion needs not to be reſcued from perſecution. The freedom of outward means of Religion is reſtrained by it, but the ſubſtance of Religion it ſelf is not. It is extended in ſome parts, and ennobled in all by ſufferings. Where it needs to be defended, diſobedience is no fit means to preſerve it, becauſe God cannot be honoured, nor Religion ſerved by it. Religion and the love of God is only the colour; but the true and real cauſe of ſuch diſobedience is a want of Religion, and too great a love of mens own ſelves. Men are liable to be deceived by this pretence from a wrong Notion of Religion, for religious opinions & profeſſions. A true Notion of Religion for religious practice upon a religious belief, as it implies both faith and obedience. The danger of diſobedience upon this pretence. The practice of all religious men in this caſe. Of Religion in the narrow acceptation, for religious profeſſions and opinions. The commendable way of mens preſerving it. First, *By acting within their own ſphere.* Secondly, *By the uſe only of lawful means.* Thirdly, *By a zeal in the firſt place for the practice of religious Laws, and next to that for the free profeſſion of religious opinions.* 330

CHAP. VII.

Of the two remaining pretences for a partial obedience.

The Contents.

The ſecond pretence for the allowed practice of ſome ſins whilſt men obey in others, is the ſerving of their neceſſities by ſinful arts in times of indigence. An account of mens diſobedience upon this pretence. The vanity of it, and the danger of diſobeying through it. A third pretence is bodily temper and complexion, age, and way of life. A repreſentation of mens diſobedience upon this pretence. The vanity of it, and the danger of ſinning through it. No juſtifying Plea for diſobedience from our age. Nor from our way of life. Nor from our natural temper and complexion. So that this integrity of the Object is excuſable upon no pretence. It was always required to mens acceptance. 355.

CHAP. VIII.

Of obeying with all the heart, and all the ſoul, &c.

The Contents.

Of obeying God with all the heart, and with all the ſtrength, &c. *It excludes not all deſire and endeavour after other things, but it implies,* Firſt, *Sincerity.* Secondly, *Fervency.* Thirdly, *Integrity, or obeying, not ſome, but all the Laws of God. Theſe three include all that is contained in it; which is ſhown from their obedience, who are ſaid in Scripture to have fulfilled it. Integrity implies ſincerity and fervency, and*

and love with all the heart is explained in the places where it is mentioned, by loving him entirely. Sincerity and uprightneſs the conditions of an acceptable obedience. This a hard Condition in the degeneracy of our manners; but that is our own fault. It was eaſie and univerſally performed by the primitive Chriſtians. This ſhown from the Characters of the Apoſtles, and of the primitive Writers. Hence it was that they could deſpiſe Death, and even provoke Martyrdom. Some Pleas from our impotence againſt the ſtrictneſs of this Obedience, which are conſidered in the next Book. 370

BOOK IV.

Shewing what defects are conſiſtent with a regenerate ſtate, and diſpenſed with in the Goſpel.

CHAP. I.

Shewing in general that ſome ſins are conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace.

The Contents.

SOme *failings conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace. This ſhewn in the general;* Firſt, *From the neceſſity of humane Nature, which cannot live without them.* Secondly, *From ſundry examples of pious men, who had right to life whilſt they lived in them* 385

CHAP. II.

Of the nature of theſe conſiſtent ſlips more particularly.

The Contents.

Our unchoſen ſins are conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace, but our wilful and choſen ones deſtroy it. All things are made good or evil, a matter of reward or puniſhment, by a Law. Laws are given for the guidance, and reward only of our voluntary and choſen actions. This proved, firſt from the clear reaſon of the thing. Where it is inferred from the nature of Laws, which is to oblige; from that way that all Laws have of obliging, which is not by forcing, but perſuading men; from the dueneſs of rewards and puniſhments, commendations and reproofs; from the applauſe or accuſations of mens own Conſciences upon their obedience or tranſgreſſions. Secondly, From the expreſs declarations of Scripture. 396

CHAP. III.

Of the nature and danger of voluntary ſins.

The Contents.

The nature of a wilful and deliberate ſin. Why it is called a deſpiſing of Gods Law, a ſinning preſumptuouſly, and with a high hand. Wilful ſins of two ſorts, viz. *ſome choſen directly and expreſly, others only indirectly and by interpretation. Of direct and interpretative volition. Things choſen in the latter way juſtly imputable. Of the voluntary cauſes of inconſideration in ſins of commiſſion, which are drunkenneſs, and indulged paſſion, or a habit of ſin. Of the power of theſe to make men inconſiderate. The cauſe of inconſideration in ſins of omiſſion,*

miſſion, viz. *Neglect of the means of acquiring Vertue. Of the voluntarineſs of all theſe cauſes. Of the voluntarineſs of drunkenneſs; when it may be looked upon as involuntary. Of the voluntarineſs of an indulged paſſion; mens great errour lies in indulging the beginnings of ſin. Of the voluntarineſs and crying guilt of a habit of ſin. Of the voluntarineſs of mens neglect of the means of Vertue. No wilful ſin is conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace, but all are damning. A diſtinct account of the effect of wilful ſins*, viz. *when they only deſtroy our acceptance for the preſent, and when moreover they greatly wound and endanger that habitual Vertue which is the foundation of it, and which ſhould again reſtore us to it for the time to come. Theſe laſt are particularly taken notice of in the accounts of God.* 409

CHAP. IV.

Of the nature of involuntary ſins, and of their conſiſtence with a ſtate of ſalvation.

The Contents.

Of involuntary actions. Of what account the forced actions of the Body are in Morals. Two cauſes of involuntarineſs. First, *The violence of mens paſſions. It doth not excuſe.* Secondly, *The ignorance of their underſtandings. This is the cauſe of all our conſiſtent failings, and the ſins that are involuntary upon this account are conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation. This proved,* 1. *From their unavoidableneſs; The cauſes of it; in what ſenſe any particular ſin among them is ſaid to be avoidable.* 2. *From the nature of God. A repreſentation of God's nature from his own Word: and mens experience. The Argument drawn from it for the conſiſtence of ſuch failings.* 3. *From the nature and declarations of the Goſpel. It is fitted to beget a cheerful and filial confidence, and therefore is called the Spirit of Adoption. The Argument from this. The Scripture Declarations, and Examples in this matter. Theſe Arguments ſummed up.* 440

CHAP. V.

Of theſe involuntary and inconſiſtent ſins particularly; and of the firſt cauſe of innocent involuntarineſs, *viz.* ignorance.

The Contents.

A twofold knowledge neceſſary to choice, viz. *a general underſtanding, and particular conſideration. Conſiſtent ſins are either ſins of ignorance, or of inconſideration. Of ſins involuntary through ignorance of the general Law which makes a Duty. How there is ſtill room for it in the World. Of crying ſins, which are againſt natural Conſcience, no man can be innocently ignorant. Of what others he may. This ignorance is neceſſary to all men for ſome time, and to ſome for all their lives. Mens ſins upon it are not damning. Of ſins involuntary through our ignorance of the preſent actions being included in the known*

known Law, and meant by it. The causes of this ignorance. First, *The difference between good and evil in some actions being not in kind, but only in degree.* Secondly, *The limitedness of most Laws which admit of exceptions.* Thirdly, *The indirect obligations which pass upon several indifferent actions.* Fourthly, *The clashing of several Laws, whence one is transgressed in pursuit of another, the great errour upon this score is in the case of zeal.* Fifthly, *The clashing of Laws with opinions or prejudices.* 461

CHAP. VI.
Of Prejudice.

The Contents.

The nature of prejudice. It a cause of ignorance of our Duty. The difference betwixt things being proposed to a free and empty, and to a prejudiced or prepossessed mind. An evident proposal sufficient to make a free mind understand its Duty; but besides it, a confutation of its repugnant prejudice is necessary to a mind that is prepossessed. An account of several Opinions which make men ignorant of several instances of Duty. One prejudice, that nothing is lawful in Gods Worship, but what is authorized by an express command, or example of Scripture; the acts of sin that are justified by this prejudice. Another that all private men are publick Protectors of Religion, and the Christian Faith; the acts of sin justified by this Opinion. Other Opinions cause a sinful neglect of the Sacraments. These are incident to some honest and obedient hearts. An account of other prejudices, as that Christ is a Temporal King; the acts of disobedience authorized by this Opinion. That a good end will justifie an evil action; the acts of sin upon this perswasion. That Dominion is founded in Grace; the disobedient acts avowed by this Principle. These are more disobedient and damning. The case stated, what prejudices are consistent with, and what destroys salvation. Some prejudices get into mens minds, not through a disobedient heart, but through weakness of understanding, and fallibility of the means of knowledge. These are consistent with a state of salvation. An instance of this in the prejudice of the Apostles about preaching of the Gospel to all Nations. Other prejudices get into mens minds through damning lusts or sins. A brief account of the influence of mens lusts and vices upon their Opinions. This is illustrated in the Gnosticks. They were famous for covetousness, and worldly compliances; and for impure lusts, and excess in bodily pleasures. The effect of these in producing agreeable Opinions. Another of their vices was a turbulent and seditious humour. Their Opinion was answerable. A further illustration of it from the Pharisees. An account of their vices, and the influence which they had in begetting vile perswasions. This influence of mens lust upon their judg-

ments proved from the Scriptures. The damnableneſs of ſuch prejudices as enter this way. Certain marks whereby to judge when prejudices proceed from unmortified luſts. As First, *If the Sin whereto the prejudice ſerves, is unmortified in them.* Secondly, *If it lie ſo near to the prejudice, that we could not but ſee that it miniſtred to it, when we embraced it.* Thirdly, *Though it lie more remote, if we ſtill adhere to it when we plainly ſee that ſome unqueſtionable and notorious Laws are evacuated, or infringed by it. A Rule to prevent diſobedient prejudices*; viz. *Let Laws be the Rule whereby to judge of truth in opinions, not opinions the Rule whereby to meaſure the Obligation of Laws. Some Reaſons of this,* viz. *Becauſe Laws are more plain and certain, but opinions are more difficult and dubious: Obedience to Laws is the end of revealed truth, and ſo fit to meaſure it, not to be meaſured by it.* 480

CHAP. VII.

A ſixth cauſe of ignorance of the preſent actions being comprehended under a known Law. And of the excuſableneſs of our tranſgreſſions upon both theſe ſorts of ignorance.

The Contents.

All the forementioned cauſes of ignorance of our preſent actions being included in the known Law, are ſuch to knowing and learned men. Beſides them, the difficult and obſcure nature of ſeveral ſins is a general cauſe of it to the rude and unlearned. Sins upon this ignorance, as well as upon ignorance of the Law it ſelf, unchoſen, and ſo conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace and Salvation. Where there is ſomething of choice in it they extenuate the ſin and abate the puniſhment, though they do not wholly excuſe it. The excuſe for theſe actions is only whilſt we are plainly ignorant: they are damning when we are enlightened ſo far as to doubt of them, but pardonable whilſt we are in darkneſs or errour. This excuſe is for both the modes of ignorance, 1. *Forgetfulneſs*; 2. *Errour. All this pardon hitherto diſcourſed of upon the account of ignorance of either ſort, is no further than the ignorance it ſelf is involuntary. The wilfulneſs of ſome mens ignorance. The ſeveral ſteps in voluntary ignorance. The cauſes of it. Two things required to render ignorance involuntary,* 1. *An honeſt heart,* 2. *An honeſt induſtry. What meaſures neceſſary to the acceptance of this induſtry. Gods candor in judging of its ſufficiency. This Diſcourſe upon this firſt cauſe of an innocent involuntarineſs,* viz. *ignorance ſummed up.* 522

CHAP. VIII.

Of ſins conſiſtent through the ſecond Cauſe of an innocent involuntarineſs, *viz.* inconſideration.

The

The Contents.

Consideration is necessary to choice. Some sins are inconsiderate. Three innocent causes of inconsideration: 1. Suddenness and surprize of opportunity. An account of this. The involuntariness of it. Slips upon it are consistent. 2. Weariness of our thinking powers or understandings. An account of this; and of its involuntariness. The consistence of our transgressions by reason of it. 3. Discomposure or disturbance of them. An account of this. The causes of it are Drunkenness, or a strong Passion. Drunkenness is always our own fault. Our Passions grow strong in us sometimes by our own indulgence, and then they are our damning Sin, and we must suffer for the evil that we commit under them: sometimes through the suddenness, and greatness of outward Objects; and then they are pardonable, and our inconsiderate slips upon them are excusable. The passions which have good for their Object, as Love, Desire, &c. cannot by any force of outward objects be so suddenly forced upon us. But the passions which have evil, as grief, anger, and fear, especially, often are. The reason of this difference. Inconsideration upon the latter excusable, but not upon the former. This difference made by our Saviour in a case where both were criminal. Excusable slips upon discomposure of our thinking powers, are such as proceed from an unwill'd sudden grief or anger, but especially from a sudden fear. No fear is involuntary but what is sudden, and Sins upon deliberate fear are damning; but upon unwill'd sudden fear, grief, or anger, consistent with salvation. Cautions about inconsiderate sins to prevent false confidence. No sin is innocently inconsiderate: 1. Where we have time and an undisturbed understanding. 2. Where the sin is mischievous, or greatly criminal. 3. When we do not strive against it. We must endeavour against all involuntary failings, though we cannot resolve against them. 4. When we are not sorry after we have commited it, nor beg pardon for it. 5. When it is committed with observation. A summary repetition of this fourth Book. 544

BOOK V.

Of those Remedies which restore men to a state of Salvation when they are fallen from it; and of some needless Scruples concerning it.

CHAP. I.

Of Repentance, which restores us to God's Favour after Sins of all sorts.

The Contents.

THE rigour of the Mosaick Law is taken away by Christ, who came to preach Pardon upon Repentance, where that denounced an unavoidable punishment. Repentance is the great Remedy. God heartily desires mens Repentance, and promises

Forgiveneſs to it. This has been preached in all times. The Remedy for our unknown ſins. They are uncapable of a particular Prayer and Repentance, but are forgiven upon a general one. The Remedy of wilful ſins is a particular Repentance. That is available for their pardon; for wilful ſins after Baptiſm, as well as before it. Two places, which ſeem to deny all pardon to wilful ſins after Baptiſm, cleared; the wilful ſin, Heb. 10. 26, *is not any wilful tranſgreſſion of any particular Law of Chriſt, which have all been pardoned; but a wilful apoſtaſie from his whole Religion, which is proved from ſundry things there ſpoken of it. The falling away mentioned* Heb. 6. *is likewiſe apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity, which is ſhewn from thoſe things which they are ſaid to fall from, and thoſe others which are ſaid to be implied in their falling. An account of the deſperate ſtate of theſe men. The ſtate of ſome habitual Sinners deſperate and irreclaimable, by reaſon their period of Grace is over, but this is no diſcouragement to any mans Repentance.* 568

CHAP. II.

Of Reconciliation, and Reſtitution upon thoſe Sins, whereby we have offended or injured our Brethren.

The Contents.

Of the neceſſity of Reconciliation upon Sins whereby we have offended, and of Reſtitution upon others whereby we have injured our Brethren. In ſin three things conſiderable, the offence againſt God, and the offence, and injury againſt men. Sins whereby God alone is offended, are ſufficiently repented of, and pardonable upon reformation and amendment. Thoſe whereby we have alſo offended, or injured our Brethren, are not ſufficiently repented of, or pardonable upon that alone, unleſs moreover we ſeek to be reconciled, and make reſtitution. Theſe two means of pardon, for affronts, and injuries againſt men, are neceſſary fruits of a ſincere, and ſufficient repentance. Of ſins whereby we have juſtly offended our Brethren. Their ill effects repreſented, which are to be redreſſed by penitential acknowledgements, and ſeeking to be reconciled. Theſe penitential acknowledgements neceſſary only to appeaſe thoſe, whom by our ſin we have offended; and ſo unneceſſary, when they know nothing of our offence. Where they do, Reconciliation is neceſſary ſo far only as it can be had, and where we have an opportunity of ſeeking it. This Diſcourſe upon Reconciliation ſummed up. Of ſins of injuſtice, whereby we have injured men. Reparation ordinarily neceſſary to a ſincere, and always to a ſufficient Repentance of them. 'Tis neceſſary moreover in it ſelf, as an inſtance of ſtrict Juſtice. An account of particular injuries, how to be repaired where the injured perſons can, and how where they cannot receive it. Reſtitution neceſſary whether our Brethren know themſelves to be injured

red by us, or no. It is due only upon sins of injustice. Of the perfect right which we have to things of strict Justice, and of the imperfect right which we have to things of Charity, whence the performance of them is sometimes called righteousness. In sins of injustice, reparation due so far only as we can, and according as we have opportunity to make it. In judging of a just opportunity, caution given that we be neither too strict, so as more than needs to prejudice our selves; nor too loose, so as to overcharge our Neighbours. This Discourse of reparation upon injuries summed up. 601

CHAP. III.
Of the Remedy for involuntary sins.

The Contents.

Involuntary sins imply something of our own fault, and so 'tis fit we should be sorry for them, and beg pardon. They had a remedy under Moses's *Law, and have now likewise under Christ's Gospel. We are qualified for their pardon, not by a particular repentance and reformation: but in the general, by our obedience in all our wilful and chosen actions; in particular, by our prayers for Gods pardon, and our Charity and forgiveness of the sins of other men. This Discourse of Repentance summed up. An Application to particular Offenders, whether voluntary or involuntary. A Summary of all that has been hitherto discoursed.* 623

CHAP. IV.
Of such groundless Scruples as make safe, but weak minds doubt of their Title to Salvation.

The Contents.

Pious minds scrupulous. Their condition is safe even then, but uncomfortable. Several needless grounds of their fears. 1. *Ineffective desires of evil. This represented. No man otherwise good shall be condemned for ineffective lusts and thoughts of evil. These are considerable either as to their first birth, or indulged continuance. The first stirrings of lusts after evil things are unavoidable. The after-entertainment is by our own indulgence. Even these are uncondemning so long as they neither are consented to, nor fulfilled, being in themselves not deadly under the Gospel, but a temptation to deadly and damning sins. The way whereby sin wins upon men, and the nature and force of temptation. To be tempted is no sin, which is proved from the nature of temptation, from* Adams *being tempted before he sinned, and from Christ's being tempted, who knew no sin. Degrees in temptation or in lusts of evil. Some are checked quickly, and are not permitted long to parly. This happens only in grown men and perfect Christians, and that too not in all instances. These certainly are not damning. Others stay longer, and strive and contend with our mind or conscience, although at last they are vanquished by it. This hap-*

happens ordinarily to younger Converts, and in extraordinary temptations to grown Christians. These still are uncondemning, which is shewn from Gal. 5. 16, 17; *and from the instance of our Saviour Christ. What lusts and desires of evil are damning. They are condemning when they make us consent to a damning sin. A distinct account of the several steps to a sinful action. A proof of this, that from their gaining of our consent, in all the after-steps they are mortal. Our lusts must be mortified to that degree, as to be disabled from carrying us on thus far. This is done when men become true Christians. The better men are, the less difficulty and self-denial do they find in mortification. Watchfulness and strife still necessary. The danger of indulging to temptations, or to lusts and desires of evil. This Point summed up.* 635

CHAP. V.
Of two other causes of groundless Scruple to good Souls.

The Contents.

A second cause of scruple is their unaffectedness, or distraction sometimes in their prayers. Of the necessity of fixedness, and fervency in Devotion when we can, and of Gods readiness to dispense with them when we cannot enjoy them. Attention disturbed often whether we will or no. A particular cause of it in fervent prayers. Fervency and affection not depending so much upon the command of our wills, as upon the temper of our Bodies. Fervency is unconstant in them whose temper is fit for it. God measures us not by the fixedness of our thoughts, or the warmth of our tempers, but by the choice of our wills, and the obedience of our lives. Other qualifications in prayer are sufficient to have our prayers heard when these are wanting. Yea, those Vertues which make our prayers acceptable, are more eminently shown in our Obedience, so that it would bring down to us the blessings of prayer, should it prove in those respects defective. A third cause of scruple is the danger of idle or impertinent words mentioned Mat. 12. 36. *The scruples upon this represented. The practical errour of a morose behaviour incurred upon it. This discountenanced by the light of Nature, and by Christianity. The benefits and place of serious Discourse. Pleasurable conversation a great Field of Vertue. The idle words,* Mat. 12. *not every vain and useless; but false, slanderous and reproachful words; this proved from the place.* 664

CHAP. VI.
Of the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is a fourth cause of scruple.

The Contents.

Some good mens fear upon this account. What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghost. Holy Ghost or Spirit is taken for the gifts or effects of it; whether they be first ordinary, either in our minds or understandings, or in our will and tempers;

pers; or secondly, extraordinary and miraculous. Extraordinary gifts of all sorts proceed from one and the same Spirit or Holy Ghost; upon which account any of them indifferently are sometimes called Spirit, sometimes Holy Ghost. Holy Ghost and Spirit are frequently distinguished, and then by Holy Ghost is meant extraordinary gifts respecting the understanding; by Spirit extraordinary gifts respecting the executive powers. The summ of this explication of the Holy Ghost. What sin against it is unpardonable. To sin against the Holy Ghost is to dishonour him. This is done in every act of sin, but these are not unpardonable. What the upardonable sin is. Of sin against the ordinary endowments of the Holy Ghost, whether of mind or will; the several degrees in this, all of them are pardonable. Of sin against the Spirit. Blaspheming of this comes very near it, and was the sin of the Pharisees, Mat. 12; *but it was pardonable. Of sinning against the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost the last means of reducing men to believe the Gospel, that Covenant of Repentance. The sin against it is unpardonable, because such Sinners are irreclamable. All dishonour of this is not unpardonable; for* Simon Magus *dishonoured it in actions, who was yet capable of pardon; but only a blaspheming of it in words. No man is guilty of it whilst he continues Christian.* 682.

CHAP. VII.

The Conclusion.

The Contents.

Some other causeless scruples. The Point of growth in Grace more largely stated. A summary repetition of this whole Discourse. They may dye with courage whose Conscience doth not accuse them. This accusation must not be for idle words, distractions in Prayer, &c. but for a wilful transgression of some Law of Piety, Sobriety, &c. above mentioned. It must further be particular and expres, not general and roving. If an honest mans heart condemn him not for some such unrepented sins, God never will. 702.

THE INTRODUCTION.

ROM. viij. 1.

There is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit.

The CONTENTS.

Religious men inquiſitive after their future State. Three Articles of Chriſtian belief cauſe ſuch inquiſitiveneſs. The Articles of Eternal Life, and the Reſurrection, make men deſire ſatisfaction. The Article of the laſt Judgement encourages the ſearch, and points out a way towards it. A propoſal of the preſent deſign, and the matters treated of in the enſuing Diſcourſe.

AMong all thoſe things which employ the minds of Religious and Conſiderate men, there is none is a matter of ſuch thoughtful care and ſolicitous enquiries, as their *Eternal Happineſs* or *Miſery* in the *next* World.

For in Chriſts Religion there are *three* great Articles, which being believed, and ſeriouſly conſidered by a nature reſtleſly deſirous of its own happineſs (and ſuch ours is) muſt needs render it very inquiſitive after

its future good eſtate, and they are theſe; The *Immortality of the Soul*, the *Reſurrection of the Body*, and the *great Day of Doom* or *laſt Judgement*. Whoſoever is firmly perſwaded of theſe three, as every man is, or at leaſt pretends to be, who profeſſes himſelf a *Chriſtian*, he aſſuredly believes that when this Life is over, both his Body and Soul ſhall live again, and be endleſly Delighted or Tormented, Comforted or Diſtreſſed in the next world, according as their condition is when they leave this. For by the Doctrine of *Eternal Life* he is aſſured that his Soul ſhall live, and be adjudged to an Eternal bliſs or miſery. By the Article of the *Reſurrection*, he is perſwaded that his Body, with all its powers, ſhall ſpring out of the duſt, and be again enlivened with its ancient Soul, to be a ſharer of its ſtate, and jointly to undergo an endleſs train of moſt exquiſite woes or pleaſures. And ſince it is the very frame and fundamental principle of our Natures ſtudiouſly to purſue Pleaſure, and to fly as faſt from Pain, to ſeek good, and to avoid evil: Theſe ſtates of future Happineſs and Miſery, are ſuch as no man, who ſees and believes them, can poſſibly be unaffected with, or unconcern'd in. But whoſoever in his own thoughts views and beholds them, muſt needs find all his faculties awake, and through an innate care, and natural inſtinct, ſolicitouſly inquiſitive after that lot which ſhall fall to their own ſhare.

Now if this endleſs happineſs and miſery both of Soul and Body in the next world were only *caſual* and *contingent*, the gift of *blind chance*, or *partial* and *arbitrary favour*; then would the belief of it perplex us indeed with fears and miſgiving thoughts, but never encourage us on to any exact care, or diligent enquiry. It would be in vain for us to ſeek what we could never find,

find, and downright folly to endeavour after ſatisfaction and certainty in things which are altogether caſual and Arbitrary. For what comes by *chance* is neither foreſeen by us, nor ſubject to us. And what is given *arbitrarily*, without all rule or reaſon, is as fickle and unconſtant as Arbitrary will it ſelf is. It cannot be prevented by any endeavours, becauſe it doth not regard them; Neither can it be collected beforehand from any fixt rule or reaſon, ſeeing it obſerves none. And what neither our greateſt wiſdom can foretell, nor our exacteſt care prevent, it is wholly to no purpoſe to make a matter of our ſtudy and enquiry.

But as for the Everlaſting happineſs or miſery of our Souls and Bodies in the other Life, and at the Reſurrection, they are not left at *random*, nor fall out by *accident*; but are diſpenſed by a *wiſe hand*, and according to a *fixt* and *eſtabliſhed rule*. For it is God who diſtributes them, and this diſtribution is in Judgment; and the procedure in that is by Laws, and thoſe Laws are unalterably fixt for us, and moſt plainly declared and publiſhed to us in the Goſpel. So that now it is no impoſſible, no nor extream difficult thing for us to underſtand which ſhall be our own ſtate in the next world. For the Laws are well known, proclaimed daily to every ear, by a whole order of men ſet apart for that purpoſe; their ſenſe and meaning is obvious to any common underſtanding; and the Judgment according to them at that day will be true and faithful. God will Abſolve all thoſe whom his Goſpel acquits, but Condemn every man whom it accuſes. There will be no perverting of Juſtice through fear or favour, no Sentence paſſed through partiality or ill will; but a Tryal every way unbyaſſed and uncorrupt, where *Everyone ſhall receive according to the things done in the body*,

2 Cor. 5. 10; And *Judgement ſhall paſs upon all men according to their works*, Rom. 2. 6.

And thus, as the belief of the two former Articles, *the immortal ſtate either of Bliſs or Miſery for our Souls*, and the *Reſurrection of our Bodies*, will inflame us with *reſtleſs deſires*: ſo, if we ſeriouſly believe it, will this third Article of the *great and general Judgement* poſſeſs us with ſure *hopes* of being ſatisfied in this great enquiry, which of the two States will fall to our own ſhare.

And as this belief of the laſt Judgement will be the moſt effectual means to *encourage*, ſo will it be withal the ſureſt to *guide* our Enquiries after it. It chalks us out a method for our ſearch, and directs us to the readieſt courſe for ſatisfaction. For if the happineſs and miſery of the next world is to be diſpenſed to every man for a reward or puniſhment, according to the direction of thoſe Laws which promiſe or threaten them: then have we nothing more to do in this inquiry, but to examine well what thoſe Laws are, what obedience they require, what allowances and mitigations they will bear, and what lot and condition they aſſign us. For in that day we ſhall be look'd upon to be what they declare us; and be doom'd to that ſtate which they pronounce for us. What they ſpeak to us all now, that the Judge of all the world will pronounce upon us all then: their ſentence ſhall be his, and what they denounce he will execute. He will judge us by no other meaſure but his own Laws; thoſe very Laws which he has taken ſo much care to proclaim to us; and continually to preſs upon us; which he has put into every one of our hands, and made to be ſounding daily in our ears; the *laws* and *ſanctions of the Goſpel*. Our bleſſed Saviour Chriſt the Judge himſelf has told us this long ago, *The word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge men at the*

the laſt day, John 12. 48. And his great Apoſtle *Paul* has again confirmed it, Rom. 2. *God ſhall judge the world* at that day *according to my Goſpel*, ver. 16. If we perform what thoſe Laws peremptorily require, they now already declare us bleſſed, and ſuch at the laſt day will Chriſt pronounce us. But if by ſinning againſt them we fall ſhort of it, they denounce nothing but everlaſting woes and miſeries, and thoſe he will execute: For he tells us plainly, that when he ſhall come to judgement *in the Glory of his Father with his holy Angels, he will reward every man according to his works*, Mat. 16. 27. *To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory and immortality*, he will give *eternal life*, Rom 2. 7. *But to them who obey not the Truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation, and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh*, and that *upon every man, whether he be Jew or Gentile*, ver. 8, 9. For all this ſhall be acted in the greateſt integrity, without preferring one before another. It is only the difference in mens works, which ſhall difference their conditions; but they who have been equal in their ſins, ſhall be equal alſo in their ſufferings. For *at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt, God*, as S. *Peter* tells us, *without any reſpect of perſons judges according to every mans work*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. 17.

The way then whereby to ſatisfie our ſelves in this great matter, is this, To look well into the Goſpel, there to learn what we ſhould be; and into our own hearts and lives, there to ſee what indeed we are; and thence to conclude what in the next world, whether in a ſtate of Life or Death, we ſhall be.

And to ſhew this to every man, and to let him ſee now beforehand how he ſtands prepared for the next world, and whether, if he ſhould be called away preſently to the Bar of that Judgment, he would be everlaſtingly

laſtingly acquitted or condemned in it, is my preſent buſineſs and deſign. It is to let us ſee our *Eternal Condition* before we enter on it, and to make it evident to every man, who is both capable and willing to be inſtructed, what ſhall be his endleſs doom of Life or Death before the Judge pronounce it.

And ſince the *Rule* of that Court, whereby we muſt all be tryed, and which muſt meaſure out to us either Life or Death, is, as we have ſeen, none other than the *Goſpel* of our Judge and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: that I may manage this enquiry with the greater light and clearneſs, I will proceed in this method.

Firſt, I will enquire, *What is that condition of our happineſs or miſery, which the Goſpel indiſpenſably exacts.*

Secondly, *What are its mitigations and allowances, thoſe defects which it pardons and bears with.*

And when at any time we fall ſhort of this condition, and thereby forfeit all right and title to that happineſs and pardon which is promiſed to us upon it: Then,

Thirdly, *What are thoſe remedies and means of recovery, which it points us out for reſtoring our ſelves again unto a ſtate of Grace and Favour, and whereupon we ſhall be reconciled.*

And having by this means diſcovered what in the great and general judgement ſhall really and truly determine our laſt eſtate, what ſhall be connived at in it; and, when once 'tis loſt, what ſhall reſtore to it: I ſhall in the

Fourth and laſt place, *Remove thoſe groundleſs doubts and ſcruples, which perplex the minds of good and ſafe, but yet erring and miſguided people concerning it.*

And having in this manner cleared up all theſe things relating to our laſt doom, and ſhewed both what in the

the Judgement ſhall be indiſpenſably required to our ſalvation; what Defects do not overthrow, but conſiſt with it; what Remedies, when 'tis wounded or loſt, can heal and reſtore us to it, and what, and of how great conſideration thoſe things really are, which being wrong underſtood, do often create cauſeleſs fears and jealouſies in good peoples minds about it: Having, I ſay, clearly accounted for all theſe, I ſuppoſe, I may think I have ſaid enough to ſhew men their Future State, and fairly take leave of this Argument.

BOOK

BOOK I.

Of the indiſpenſable condition of happineſs in the general.

CHAP. I.

Of Obedience, the general condition of happineſs.

The Contents.

Obedience the indiſpenſable condition of happineſs. The Laws of the Goſpel are given as a Rule to it. The Promiſes are all upon condition of it, and intended to encourage it. All the threatnings are now denounced, and will be executed upon the diſobedient. Of thoſe other things whereto Pardon is promiſed, as well as to obedience. Of Metonymy's. Of the Principles of Humane Actions. Of Principles of Obedience. All thoſe ſpeeches metonymical, where obedience is not expreſs'd, and yet pardon is promiſed.

THat *Condition which the Goſpel indiſpenſably requires of us*, and *which is to mete out to us our laſt doom of Bliſs or Miſery*, is in the *General* our *Obedience*. When we are brought to that Bar, and ſtand to be judged according to thoſe Laws which are proclaim'd to us in the Goſpel, it is only our having kept them, and

and Repented of all ſuch tranſgreſſions of them as we have wilfully been guilty of, which can capacitate us to be rewarded by them. For 'tis juſt with them, as it is with all other Laws, they never promiſe any thing but to obedience, but threaten and puniſh all that diſobey. Whoſoever breaks and deſpiſes them is guilty, they do not comfort but accuſe, not acquit but condemn him. For there is no Law that is wiſely ordered, but is ſufficiently guarded againſt affront, and back'd with ſuch puniſhments as will make it every mans intereſt to fulfil and keep it. The evil threatned, muſt always by far exceed the pleaſure that is reaped by diſobedience; ſo that no man may have any temptation ſufficient to bear him out in Sin, or ever hope to be a gainer by his tranſgreſſion.

This is the tenour of all wiſe laws, whoſe enactors have both *wit* and *power* ſufficient to defend them. They have dreadful Puniſhments annexed to them, which take place upon diſobedience; they encourage and reward the obedient, but ſeverely puniſh all that dare preſume to diſobey.

And this is moſt eminently ſeen in all the Laws of our Lord and ſaviour Jeſus Chriſt. He gave them for the *compleateſt Rules* to mens Lives, and has annexed to them moſt *glorious Promiſes* to encourage our obedience, but has made them breathe out nothing but woes, and *intolerable puniſhments* to all that diſobey.

He has given them for *Rules of Life*, and *annexed Rewards as encouragements to obedience*. He never intended his Laws for an entertainment of our eyes, but for a Rule for our Actions; not for a matter of talk and diſcourſe, but of practice; not to be complemented by words of honour, and lofty expreſſions, but to be own'd in our lives, and ſerved by obedience. He is our King, and iſſues out his Laws as the inſtruments

of his Government: he is our Lord, and they are Rules for his Service. They muſt be guides of our Lives and Actions; it is not enough to know and talk of them, but, as ever we hope to live by them, we muſt do and keep them. For in the end they will be available to no mans happineſs, but his who has conſcientiouſly performed them. *In Chriſt Jeſus*, or the Chriſtian Religion, ſays S. *Paul*, *nothing* avails but *keeping of the Commandments of God*, 1 Cor. 7. 19. *Bleſſed are they*, ſaith S. *John*, *who do the Commandments, for they only have right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. 22. 14. It is not an idle wiſh, or ineffectual endeavour; but a thorough practice and performance of Chriſts Laws which can continue us in his Love, and approve us Righteous in his Judgement. *If ye keep my Commandments*, ſays he, *ye ſhall abide in my Love*, Joh. 15. 10. *Let no man deceive you*, for it is *he* only *that* * *doth Righteouſneſs*, who in Gods account *is Righteous*, 1 Joh. 3. 7. They only are pronounced Righteous and Sons of God in the Goſpels eſtimation, who *walk after the ſpirit*, Rom. 8. 4; who *are led by the ſpirit*, verſ. 14. who bring forth *the fruits of the Spirit*, (all words expreſſing Action and Practice) *Gal.* 5. 16. 22. No man therefore will be acquitted and rewarded at that Bar barely for knowing and * diſcourſing, for wiſhing or deſiring: but only for working and obeying. Such only the Goſpel reckons for true ſervants now; *his ſervants ye are*, not whom you confeſs in words, but *whom* in actions *you obey*, Rom. 6. 16. And ſuch only he will honour and reward then. For it is *not every one* who fawns upon me in his words whilſt he reproaches me in his actions; *who ſays unto me, Lord, Lord*, that *ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; *but he* only *who doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven:* Which will he had juſt then proclaim'd to them in that Volume of

1 John 2. 17, 29.

* Ἔργοις δικαιωθῆναι, οὐ λόγοις. Clem. Ro. 1 Epiſt. ad. Cor. c. 30.

of Chriſtian Laws, which was publiſhed in the Sermon upon the Mount, whereof this is in part the concluſion, *Matt.* 7. 21. He tells us that when the Son of Man ſhall come to Judgment, *he will reward every man according to his works*, Matt. 16. 27. And he repeats it again in his declaration to S. *John*, *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work ſhall be*, Rev. 22. 12. And ſo it was in that Prophetick ſight of the Laſt Judgment, which this ſame Apoſtle had vouchſafed him, *Rev.* 20. For there, as we are told, when *the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it; and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them; and they all both ſmall and great ſtood before the Throne, and him that ſate thereon: they were judged every man according to his* WORKS, verſ. 11, 12, 13.

His Laws then Chriſt has given us, not for talk and diſcourſe, but for action and practice; and his Promiſes he has annexed to them, not as rewards of idleneſs, but only of active ſervice and obedience: Wherein if men fail, Gods Rewards belong not to them; they can make no claim or colourable pretence to them, becauſe they cannot ſhow that which is to be rewarded by him.

Nay further, if men diſobey, they are not only excluded from all *glorious hopes*; but are moreover put into a deſperate ſtate of *fears* and *dreadful expectations*. For God has back'd his Laws with *threatnings* as well as *promiſes*: and as they propoſe moſt noble *rewards* to all that are obedient; ſo likewiſe do they breath out moſt intolerable *puniſhments* to all that diſobey. For every Man at the laſt day will be declared *a Child of wrath*, who is a *ſon of diſobedience*; and he ſhall moſt certainly be Damned who dies, without amendment and Repentance, in works which are wilfully and de-

liberately ſinful. Chriſts Goſpel has already judged this long before-hand; and at that day he will confirm it. *When the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels*: *i. e.* when he ſhall come with his Royal attendance to judge the world, *He will take vengeance*, ſays S. *Paul*, *on all them that* OBEY *not his Goſpel, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord*, 2 Theſſ. 1. 7, 8, 9. When he comes in ſtate with *the ten thouſands of his Saints*, it will be *to execute Judgment upon all that are ungodly, for all the ungodly* DEEDS *which they have committed*, Jude 14, 15. And when our Lord himſelf gives a relation of his proceedings at that day, he tells us that whoſoever they be, or whatſoever they may pretend, if their works have been diſobedient, they ſhall hear no ſentence from him but what conſigns them to Eternal Puniſhment. *I will profeſs* thus *unto them*, ſays he, *I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that* WORK *iniquity*, Matt. 7. 23.

This will be the method of Chriſts Judgment; and theſe the meaſures of his Sentence: he will pronounce Mercy and Life upon all that are obedient, but Death and Hell to all that diſobey.

And indeed it were hight of folly and madneſs to expect he ſhould do otherwiſe, and to fancy that when he comes to judge us, as S. *Paul* ſays, *according to the* Laws of his *Goſpel*, he ſhould abſolve and reward us, when in our works and actions we have tranſgreſſed them. For this were to thwart his own rule, and to go croſs to his own meaſures; it were to encourage thoſe, whom his laws threaten; to acquit ſuch as they condemn: and, in one word, not to judge *according* to them, as he has expreſly declared he will, but *againſt* them.

If we would know then what condition we ſhall be adjudged

adjudged to in the next world, we muſt examine what our obedience has been in this. We can have no aſſurance of a favourable Sentence in that Court, but only the doing of our duty. Our laſt doom ſhall turn, not upon our *knowing* or *not knowing*, our *willing* or *not willing*; but upon our *obeying* or *diſobeying*. It is in vain to caſt about for other marks, and to ſeek after other evidences: nothing leſs than this performance of our duty can avail us unto life; and by the *merits of Chriſt*, and the *grace of his Goſpel*, it ſhall.

And thus we ſee in the *general* what thoſe terms and that condition are, which, to mete out our laſt doom of Bliſs or Miſery, the Goſpel indiſpenſably exacts of us. It is nothing leſs than a *working ſervice* and *obedience*, the enquiry to be made at that day being only this, whether we *have done what was commanded us*. If we have performed what was required of us, we ſhall be pronounced Righteous, and ſentenced to Eternal Life: but if we have wilfully tranſgreſſed, and wrought wickedneſs, without amendment and repentance, we ſhall then be declared incorrigible Sinners, and adjuged to Everlaſting Death.

This indeed is a very great truth, but yet ſuch as very few are willing to ſee and to conſider of. For obedience is a very laborious ſervice, and a painful task; and they are not many in number who will be content to undergo it. And if a man may have no juſt hopes upon any thing leſs than it, the caſe of moſt dying men is deſperate. But as men will live and dye in ſin, ſo will they live and dye in hopes too. And therefore they catch at ſofter terms, and build upon an eaſier condition. And becauſe the Goſpel promiſes Salvation, and a happy ſentence to *faith*, *love*, *repentance*, our *being in Chriſt*, our *knowing Chriſt*, and other things beſides obedience: they conclude that they ſhall be acquitted

at

at that Bar upon the account of *any*, or *all* of theſe, though they do not obey with them. They make Faith, Love, Repentance and the reſt, to be ſomething ſeparate from obedience; ſomething which will ſave them, when that is wanting. So that if they *be in Chriſt*, if they *know* and *believe with the mind*, and *love* and *repent in their hearts*; their hope is to be abſolved at the laſt day, be their lives and actions never ſo diſobedient.

But this is a moſt dangerous and damning errour. For it makes men ſecure from danger, till they are paſt all poſſibility of recovering out of it; and cauſes them to truſt to a falſe ſupport ſo long, till it lets them drop into Hell, and ſink down in damnation.

And although it be ſufficiently evident from what has been already ſaid, that our obedience is that only thing which will be admitted as a juſt plea, and as a qualification able to ſave us in that Court: yet becauſe I would fully ſubvert all theſe falſe grounds, whereupon men ſupport their pernicious hopes and ſinful lives together, I will go on to prove it ſtill further.

And this will be moſt plainly effected by ſhewing that all *thoſe other terms* and *conditions*, *whereto the Goſpel ſometimes promiſes pardon and happineſs*, *concenter all in this*, *and ſave us no otherwiſe than by being ſprings and principles of our obedience*. They are not oppoſed to our doing of our duty, and keeping the Commandments; but imply it. For when pardon is promiſed to *Faith*, to *Love*, to *Repentance*, or any thing elſe; it is never promiſed to them as *ſeparate* from obedience, but as *containing* it. Obedience is that ſtill for which a man is ſaved and pardoned; it is not excluded from them, but expreſſed by them.

In order to a clearer apprehenſion of the truth of this, I think fit to obſerve that there is an ordinary figure

figure and form of ſpeech very uſual both with God and men, which the Rhetoricians call a *Metonymie* or *Tranſnomination*, and that is a *transferring of a word, which is the particular Name of one thing, to expreſs another*. The uſe of it is this, that in things which have a near relation and dependance upon each other, as particularly the *cauſe* and its *effect* have, the particular name of either may many times ſignifie both, ſo that when the name only of one is expreſſed, yet really both are meant and intended. And then by that word, which in its proper ſence ſtands only for the effect, we are to underſtand, not it alone, but together with it the cauſe alſo that produced it: and by that which properly ſignifies the cauſe, we are to mean, not the bare cauſe alone but, beſides it, the effect which flows from it likewiſe.

As for the latter of theſe, the *bare naming of the cauſe when we intend, together with it, to expreſs its natural conſequent and effect too*; becauſe it is that which chiefly concerns our preſent buſineſs, I will ſet down ſome inſtances of it which daily occur in common ſpeech. If we adviſe a man to *truſt his Phyſician* or his *Lawyer*, our meaning is not barely that he ſhould *give credit* to them; but together with that, that he ſhew the effect of ſuch credit, in *following* and *obſerving* them. If we are earneſt with any man to *hearken to ſome advice* that is given him, we intend not by hearkning to expreſs barely his *giving ear* to it, but beſides that his ſuffering the effects of ſuch attention in *practiſing* and *obeying* it. And thus we commonly ſay that we have got a Cold, when we mean a Diſeaſe upon cold; or a Surfeit, when we underſtand a ſickneſs upon Surfeiting. In theſe, and many other inſtances which might be mentioned, we daily find that in the ſpeech and uſage of men, the cauſe alone is oft-times named, when the effect is withal intended, and accordingly underſtood,

ſtood, to be expreſſed; and that both are meant, when barely one is ſpoken. The effect doth ſo hang upon its cauſe, and ſo naturally and evidently follow after it, that we look upon it as a needleſs thing to expreſs its coming after, when once we have named its cauſe which goes before: but we ordinarily judge it to be ſufficiently mentioned, when we have expreſſed that cauſe, which, as is evident to us all, produces and infers it.

And as it is thus in the ſpeech of *men*, ſo is it in the language of *God* too. He talks to us in our own way, and uſes ſuch forms of ſpeech and figurative expreſſions, as are in common uſe among our ſelves. And to ſeek no further for inſtances of this, than theſe that lye before us, he expreſſes our *works* and *obedience* by our *knowledge*, our *repentance*, our *love*, and ſuch other *cauſes* and *principles* as effect and produce it.

For we muſt take notice of this alſo, that our outward works and actions depend upon a train of powers within us, which, as ſprings and cauſes of them, order and effect them. For our *paſſions* excite to them; our *underſtandings* conſider of them and direct them; our *wills* command and chooſe them; and then afterwards, in purſuance of all theſe, our *bodily powers* execute and exert them. The actions of a man flow from all the ingredients of the humane nature, each principle contributes its ſhare, and bears a part towards it. For from the conſtitution of our natural frame, our actions are placed wholly in the power of our own wills; and our wills are ſet in a middle ſtation, to be moved by our appetites and paſſions, and guided and directed by our minds or intellects. We do and perform nothing but what we will; neither do we will any thing but what we know and deſire; what our reaſon and paſſion inclines and directs to. And becauſe

theſe

theſe three inward faculties, our *minds*, and *wills*, and *paſſions*, give being and beginning to our outward works and practice: therefore are they, by the Maſters of *moral Philoſophy* and *Divinity*, ordinarily called the *Cauſes* and *Principles of Humane Actions*.

But theſe three principles of humane actions in *general* lye not more open to produce good than evil. They are all under the unreſtrain'd power of our own free will: it is that which determines them either for God or againſt him; but in themſelves they are indifferently fitted, and ſerve equally to bring forth acts of Obedience or of diſobedience and ſin. To make theſe principles therefore of *works* or *actions in general*, to become principles of *good works* and *obedience*, there are other nearer tempers and qualifications required, which may determine them, that in *themſelves* are free to both, to effect one, and be Authors of ſuch actions only whereby we ſerve and obey God. And this is done by the nearer and more immediate efficiency of *Faith*, *Repentance*, *Love*, and the like. For he who knows Gods Laws, and believes his Goſpel with his underſtanding; who in his heart loves God, and hates Sin; whoſe will is utterly reſolved for good, and againſt evil: he it is, whoſe faculties in *themſelves* indifferent are thus determinately diſpoſed, who is ready and prepared to perform his duty. His Faith directs him to thoſe Laws which he is to obey, and to all the powerful motives to Obedience: it ſhews him how it is bound upon him by all the joys of Heaven, and by all the Pains of Hell, and this quickens his paſſions, and confirms all good reſolutions, and makes him in his will and heart to purpoſe and deſire it. And when both his mind, his will, and paſſions, which were before indifferent, are thus gained over and determinately fixed for it; in the efficiency of inward principles there is no more to be

done, but he is in the ready way to work and perform it in outward operation. So that as our minds, wills, and paſſions, are principles of humane actions in general, whether good or evil: theſe nearer diſpoſitions, our Faith, Repentance, *&c.* are principles particularly of good works and obedience.

And ſince our obedient actions proceed in this manner from the power and efficiency of theſe principles: God, according to our own way of expreſſing things, is wont many times only to name them, when he intends withal to expreſs our obedience it ſelf which reſults from them. Although he barely mention one, yet he underſtands both; and in ſpeaking of the cauſe, he would be taken to imply the effect likewiſe. Thus when he promiſes *Pardon* and *Salvation* to our *knowledge* and *belief of his Goſpel*, to our *Repentance from our Sins*, to our *Love* and *fear of God*, which, with ſeveral others, are thoſe preparatory diſpoſitions, that fix and determine our minds, wills, and paſſions, indifferent in themſelves, to effect Obedient actions; he doth not in any wiſe intend that theſe ſhall Save us, and procure Pardon for us without Obedience, but only by ſignifying and implying it. Whereſoever Mercy and Salvation at the laſt day are promiſed, and this condition of our working and obeying is not mentioned, it is always meant and underſtood. That which ſuch mercy was promiſed to, is either the *cauſe* of our Obedience, or the *effect* and *ſign* of it; the ſpeech is *metonymical*, and more was meant by it than was expreſſed. Though the word was not named, yet the thing was intended; for obedience is ever requiſite to pardon, and nothing has Mercy promiſed to it in the laſt Judgment, but what ſome way or other is a ſign of it, or produces and effects it.

This I might well take for granted upon the ſtrength of

of that proof which has been already urged for our Obedience being the ſole condition of our being acquitted at that day. But becauſe the intereſt of ſouls is ſo much concerned in it, I will be yet more particular, and proceed to ſhow further that this ſence and explication of all ſuch places is the very ſame that God himſelf has expreſsly put upon them. For concerning all thoſe things, whereto he has promiſed a favourable ſentence at the laſt Judgment, he aſſures us that they are of no account with him, nor will be owned as a good plea at that Bar when they are ſeparate from Obedience, but then only when they effect and work it. But when he ſays that Faith, Repentance, Love, or any other thing ſhall ſave us, he means not all, or any, but only a working Faith, an obedient Repentance, an active Love; a Faith, Love, and Repentance, which do not overlook Obedience, but accompany and produce it. So that firſt or laſt Obedience is ſtill that wherein all the reſt muſt concenter and agree, that alone condition which our judge will accept, and which we may ſafely truſt to. And this will fully appear by running over the particulars.

CHAP. II.

Of Pardon promiſed to Faith, Knowledge, and being in Chriſt.

The CONTENTS.

Of Pardon and happineſs promiſed to Faith and Knowledge. Of the nature of Faith in general. Of Natural, Jewiſh, and Chriſtian Faith. Of this laſt as juſtifying and ſaving. Of the fitneſs of Chriſtian Faith and Knowledge to produce Obedience. Pardon promiſed to them no further than they are productive of it. Of Pardon promiſed to being in Chriſt. Chriſt ſometimes ſignifies the Chriſtain Religion, ſometimes the Chriſtian Church. Being in Chriſt, is being of Chriſts Religion, or a member of Chriſts Church. The fitneſs of theſe to effect Obedience. Pardon promiſed to them no further than they do.

FIRST this condition of our acceptance which is to mete out to us our laſt doom of Bliſs and Mercy, and whereto Life and Pardon are promiſed at the laſt day, is ſometimes called *knowledge*, or, what is only a more particular way of knowing, a knowing upon witneſs or teſtimony, *Faith*. *By*, or upon the account of, *his knowledge*, or the knowledge of him, *ſhall my Righteous Servant*, when he ſits to judge them, *juſtifie many*, ſays God of our Judge and Saviour Chriſt by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Iſa.* 53. 11. And *this is Life Eternal*, ſays our Lord himſelf, *to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*,

ſent, Joh. 17. 3. And then as for *Faith*, which is the particular way of knowledge among us Chriſtians, who owe all that we know in order to Heaven and happineſs to the witneſs and teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, the places which promiſe Life and Pardon unto it are to be met with in abundance. *Whoſoever believes on me*, ſays our Saviour, *ſhall not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life*, Joh. 3. 15, 16. And again, *This is the will of him that ſent me, that whoſoever believes on me may have Everlaſting Life*, Joh. 6. 40. And when he ſends out his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection, to proclaim the terms of Mercy and Salvation to all the world, he bids them ſay, *whoſoever believeth and is Baptized ſhall be ſaved*, Mar. 16. 16.

Faith or *belief* in the *general*, is a *thinking ſomething to be true upon the teſtimony of thoſe perſons who declare it.* And herein it differs from other ſorts of *knowledge*, becauſe in them we believe upon the evidence and apparent reaſon of the *things themſelves*; but in this upon the witneſs and authority of thoſe *perſons who reveal* them. For then we are ſaid to *know*, *when we aſſent upon the Authority of things*; but then to *believe*, *when we aſſent upon the Authority of perſons*; when not the evidence of the things revealed, but the word and teſtimony of the revealer make us give credit to his Revelation.

This is the nature of Faith in general, it is a giving credit to a thing, or taking it to be true, upon the teſtimony or authority of ſuch perſons as declare it. And according to the difference of this teſtimony, our Faith upon it is differenced and diſtinguiſhed alſo. For if we believe any thing upon the bare word of a man, it is an *Humane*; if upon the bare word and teſtimony of God, it is a *Divine* Faith.

Divine Faith then is nothing elſe, but *a belief of Divine Revelations*, a taking any thing to be true becauſe God

God has told us it is ſo. And therefore we may be ſaid to have Divine Faith of as many things, as God has any way atteſted or revealed to us. And for Gods Revelations, they have been derived to us in ſeveral ways, and by ſeveral inſtruments.

For ſome things God has revealed to us by the *light of Nature*. That light came from him, and is his Re-
† Prov. 20. 27. velation. For † *the ſpirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*, which, as S. *John* ſaith in another caſe of our Saviour, *enlightens every man that cometh into the world*, Joh. 1. 9. And in this general ſence of Faith, for a *natural Faith*, or a belief of all natural Revelations; all matters of knowledge are likewiſe matters of Faith, becauſe at laſt all natural light and evidence of things reſt upon Gods Revelation; that very evidence being no otherwiſe a proof to us that things are true, than we are aſſured that God is the Author of it, and that it is his Teſtimony and declaration to them that they are ſo. And by this way of Revelation, this natural light, God has declared to us two great foundations of all Religion, *his own exiſtence*, and *his Providence*; that there is a God, and that he will love and reward all ſuch as ſerve and worſhip him. The belief of which Articles ſo teſtified, S. *Paul* affirms to be a part of *Faith*; yea a part ſo *fundamental*, as is abſolutely neceſſary to our pleaſing of God and to all Religion: *without Faith*, ſaith he, *it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, for he who comes to God muſt believe that HE IS, and that he is A REWARDER of them that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6.

Other things God has revealed, not by the *light of nature*, ſeeing they are ſuch things as that alone could never have diſcovered to us, but either by his own *immediate voice or inſpiration*, or by the *mediation* and *meſſage of inſpired men*.

By

By the former he revealed to *Noah* the *Drowning of the old world*, Gen. 6. 13; the belief whereof is called *Noahs Faith*, Heb. 11. 7. To *Abraham* his having a *numerous Iſſue* by his *Wife Sarah*, when as yet they had no Child, and in all appearance were too *old* ever to expect one, *Gen.* 15. 5, 6. and *Chap.* 17. 17, 19; the belief whereof is likewiſe call'd *Abraham's Faith*, *Heb.* 11. 17, 18, 19. To *Moſes* his *paſſing over all the houſes of the Iſraelites*, where he ſhould ſee the *Blood* of the Paſchal Lamb ſprinkled for a *Token*, when he would ſlay all the Firſt-born throughout all the Land of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 12. 12. 13; the belief of which Revelation is alſo call'd the *Faith of Moſes*, *Heb.* 11. 28.

By the latter he reveal'd his will more largely to the whole *people of Iſrael*, by the mouth and † *mediation* of his Servant *Moſes*; and becauſe both *God* and *Man* concurr'd in this Teſtimony, their belief of his meſſage was their *Faith, not in God only*, but, together with him, in his *Servant Moſes* too. For becauſe the Law and Religion which they received, though it came originally from God, was yet derived down to them immediately by his Miniſtry, and they knew no otherwiſe what God hath ſpoken to them than by his Teſtimony, and upon his Authority: therefore are they ſaid in believing and embracing that Divine Law, which was delivered to them by *Moſes*, to believe, not *the Lord* alone, but alſo his *Servant Moſes*, *Exod.* 14. 31; *Joh.* 5. 46; to be *Baptized into Moſes*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 2; to be *Moſes's Diſciples*, *Joh.* 9. 28; to *truſt* or place their hope *in Moſes*, *Joh.* 5. 45; to *obey* or *harken* unto *Moſes*, *Luk.* 16. 31. † Gal. 3. 19.

But the moſt clear and full Revelation that God ever made of his will to men, was by the meſſage and mediation of his own Son, *Jeſus Chriſt*. For *God, who at ſundry times, and in divers manners ſpake in times paſt*

paſt to the Jews by *Moſes*, and to *the Fathers by the Prophets*; *hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. 1. 1. And the belief of his Goſpel, or taking for certain truths upon his authority all thoſe things which he has declared to us in Gods name, is call'd the *Chriſtian*, as the other was the *Moſaick* Faith. For he being the great Author and deriver of this laſt and greateſt Revelation of God down to us, and our belief of it being upon his immediate Authority, he being, as S. *Paul* ſays, *the Author and finiſher of our Faith*, Heb. 12. 2: Our belief of it is called, not only *Faith towards God*, Heb. 6. 1; but alſo *Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Acts 20. 21. And becauſe the knowledge of our whole Religion got into our minds this way, upon our ſubmiſſion to Chriſts Authority, and our Faith or belief of his Teſtimony; therefore is our *Religion* it ſelf moſt commonly in the Scriptures called our *Faith*. The Preaching of it is called *Preaching the Faith*, Gal. 1. 23; the hearing of it, *hearing of Faith*, Gal. 3. 2; the profeſſion of it, a *profeſſion of Faith*, Heb. 10. 23; the contending for it, a *ſtriving for the Faith*, Phil. 1. 27; the erring in it, an *erring from the Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 10; the falling from it, *a making ſhipwrack of the Faith*, 1 Tim. 1. 19; obedience to it, the *obedience of Faith*, Rom. 1. 5. and the Righteouſneſs required in it, and effected by it, *the Righteouſneſs of Faith*, Rom. 4. 11, 13.

So that in like manner as the *Moſaick Faith* was a belief of the Divinity of the *Moſaick* Law and Religion, upon the *Authority of Moſes*: the *Chriſtian Faith* is a belief of the Divine inſtitution of our Chriſtian Religion, upon the *Authority of Chriſt*. It is a taking upon his word all thoſe things for truths of God, which he has declared to us in Gods Name. A belief begot in us by vertue of his Teſtimony, that all his Doctrines,

are

are Gods Truths; that all his Laws, are Gods Precepts; that all his Promiſes, are Gods Promiſes; and that all his Threats are Gods Threatnings: in ſum, that that whole Religion and Goſpel which Chriſt has delivered to us in Gods Name, is the very Religion and Word of God.

The belief of all this upon the *Authority of Chriſt* makes our *Faith Chriſtian*; and the *good effect* of it upon our *hearts* and *lives*, make it *juſtifying and ſaving*. For when by vertue of this Faith we truly Repent and ſincerely obey, which is the great condition, as we have ſeen, whereupon at the laſt day we muſt all be pardoned and juſtified Eternally; it is a *juſtifying*: as when by vertue of it we are ſaved and delivered from the dominion and ſervice of our Sins, which, as the Angel hath *b* aſſured us, are thoſe principal evils that Chriſt came to *ſave us from*, it is a *ſaving* Faith.

b Matth. 1. 21.

This is the nature of our *Chriſtian knowledge*, and our *Chriſtian Faith*. And as for it now, it is the very *fundamental cauſe* and natural ſpring of all our Chriſtian ſervice and obedience. For it is becauſe we believe Jeſus to be the Lord, becauſe we know thoſe Laws which he has given us, and give credit to him when he tells us of the inſupportable puniſhments which he will one day inflict for ſin, and of the glorious rewards which he will confer upon obedience: It is by means of our knowledge and belief of all theſe in our minds, I ſay, that we ſerve and obey him in our outward actions. It is our knowledge and belief that lets us ſee the reaſonableneſs of his Precepts, the power of his Aſſiſtances, the glory of his Rewards, and the terror of his Puniſhments; and in all reſpects convinces us of the beauty and profit of Obedience. And this ſight and conviction in our minds, cannot well miſs of gaining our hearts and reſolutions. For the belief of his endleſs judgments will

raiſe our fears; the belief of his infinite rewards will quicken our hopes; the belief of his inexpreſſible kindneſs will kindle our love; and by all theſe our ſouls will be led Captive into eager deſires, and firm reſolutions, and be fully purpoſed to keep Gods Laws, that ſo they may avoid that terrible Death which he threatens, and attain thoſe matchleſs joyes which he promiſes to our Obedience. And when once, by means of this faith and knowledge, Gods Laws have gain'd both our wills and paſſions, which are the inward ſprings and cauſes of them, they cannot fail of being obeyed in our works and actions which are produced by them. But we ſhall quickly go on to perform what we reſolve, and to do what we deſire; and ſo in very deed fulfill and obey them. Upon which account of our Chriſtian Faith having ſo mighty an influence upon our Chriſtian and obedient practice, our obedience it ſelf, as being the effect of it and produced by it, is call'd *the obedience of Faith*, Rom. 16. 26. The Righteouſneſs which it exacts of us, and *c cooperates* to work in us, *the Righteouſneſs of Faith*, Gal. 5. 5. Our Chriſtian warfare or ſtriving againſt Sin, is called *the good fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. And becauſe in this conteſt our great ſuccours which protect us, and keep us from fainting, and at laſt make us victorious, are ſome points or promiſes of our Religious belief: therefore is it ſtiled *a ſhield, and a breaſt-plate of Faith*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 8; and S. *John* affirms plainly, *that this is the victory over the world, even our Faith*, 1 John 5. 4.

c Jam. 2 22. Συνήργει τῇ πίστει ἔργοις.

And for this reaſon it is, becauſe our Faith and knowledge are ſo powerful a cauſe and principle of our Obedience, that God ſpeaks ſo great things of them, and has made ſuch valuable promiſes to them. He never intends to reward the Faith and knowledge of our minds, further than they *d* effect the obedience of our

d τίνος χάριν εὐλογήθη ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Αβραὰμ; ἢ χὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀληθείαν διὰ πίστεως ποιήσας; Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Cor. c. 31.

our actions. It is only when they are carried on to this effect, when they become an *obedient knowledge*, and a e *working Faith*, that they confer a right to the promiſed reward, and are available to our Salvation. For when in the places mentioned, or in any other, God promiſes, that he who *knows Chriſt*, or *believes in Chriſt*, ſhall live; he ſpeaks *metonymically*, and means Faith and knowledge with this effect of a working ſervice and obedience.

e *Quid eſt fideliter Chriſto credere? eſt fideliter Dei mandata ſervare.* Salvian. de Gub. l. 3. p. 67. Ed. Oxon.

Ἀβραὰμ ὁ φίλος προσαγορζευθεὶς πιστὸς ἐυρέθη, ἐν τῷ αὐτὸν ὑπήκοον γενέσθαι τοῖς ῥήμασι τοῦ θεοῦ. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 10.

As for *knowledge*, 'tis plain that God accepts it no otherwiſe than as it effects obedience, nor can we any otherwiſe confide in it. *Hereby* alone, ſayes S. *John*, *we know that we know him*, in that ſenſe of knowledge whereto God has promiſed life and pardon, *if we keep his Commandments*. But *he that ſaith I know him, and* for all that *keepeth not his Commandments, he is a lyar, and the truth is not in him*, 1 John 2. 3, 4.

And then as for *Faith*, no man is interpreted to have that Faith which is made the condition of our pardon and acceptance, but he who is acted by it, and in his works is obedient to it. *The Faith*, ſayes S. *Paul*, *which in Chriſt Jeſus* or the Chriſtian Religion *availeth any thing* to that *Righteouſneſs* which all Chriſtians *hope for*, is that only *which worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 5, 6. It begins the change within, by *purifying of our hearts* and deſires, *Acts* 15. 9; and thence goes on to perfect it in our outward works and actions. And unleſs it proceed to this, it will never be able to bear us out, and to juſtifie us at Gods Bar: for there, as S. *James* tells us, *by our* f *works we muſt all be juſtified, and not by a Faith only* which works nothing, *Jam.* 2. 24. Such alas! will be wholly uſeleſs, and of no conſideration in that Court; it will not any way profit, and then

f Mat. 25, 34, 35, 36, &c.

certainly it cannot ſave us. For *what doth it profit, my Brethren, though a man* be able to *ſay*, either here or hereafter, *he hath Faith, and hath not works*; will that be allow'd a ſufficient plea in Gods Judgment? *ſhall* that *Faith ſave him*; no ſurely, it never will, *Jam.* 2. 14. This unworking Faith is not that effectual Faith which the Goſpel encourages, but its worthleſs ſhell and liveleſs carkaſs. *For wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Even as the body without the ſpirit is dead, ſo faith without works is dead alſo*, ver. 20. 26. It is Faith only in an imperfect degree, and a weak unprofitable meaſure; for it is not arrived to a perfect pitch, to that compleat ſtate whereto the Goſpel doth at preſent promiſe Life, and Chriſt will at the laſt Day award it, till it ſhews it ſelf in action, and our lives expreſs the power of it. *Our Father Abraham*, ſayes S. *James*, *was juſtified by works*, produced by Faith, *when*, in an unſtagger'd belief that God would make good his promiſe of a numerous iſſue by his Son *Iſaac*, though it were by raiſing him up again from the *g* dead, he would obey his command which ſeemed quite to overthrow it, and *offered up his Son upon the Altar*. *Seeſt thou how his Faith* in Gods Power and Promiſe *wrought* prevalently over all oppoſition *h*, *to* the production of that *his* ſtrange *work*; and *by* this juſtifying *work* upon it *was* his *Faith made perfect?* ver. 21, 22.

g Heb. 1. 17, 19.

h Συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις, wrought to his works or to make him work.

So that when all is done, we ſee that there is no Life or Pardon promiſed to any Faith or knowledge which are ſeparate from Obedience, but to ſuch only as cooperate to them, and imply them. There is no belief wherewith our Judge at the laſt day will be ſatisfied, or wherein we are ſafe; which either he will accept, or we may truſt to, if our dutiful works are wanting. So that *this is*, and ever will be, as S. *Paul* ſayes,

ſayes, *a faithful ſaying, and ſuch as every good Chriſtian man ought conſtantly to receive* or affirm, *that they who* have Faith, or *have believed in God, be careful to maintain* obedience and *good works*, becauſe it is they which at the laſt day muſt do all men good, *are good and profitable unto men*, Tit. 3. 8.

Secondly, This condition of our acceptance, whereto the Goſpel promiſes a happy ſentence of Life and Pardon in the laſt judgement, is ſometimes called, *Being in Chriſt*. *There is no condemnation*, ſayes S. *Paul*, *to them who are in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 8. 1.

The word *Chriſt*, we muſt know, many times in Scripture ſignifies the *Religion* of Chriſt. Thus *the Law* is ſaid to be *a Schoolmaſter to bring us to Chriſt*, *i. e.* the imperfect rule of the *Moſaick* Religion was fitted for the minority of the world, and intended to train men up, as Children are by School Diſcipline, for the more perfect and manly inſtitution of the Chriſtian, *Gal.* 3. 24. And thus we read of *Preaching Chriſt*, that is the Chriſtian Religion, *Phil.* 1. 15. And S. *Paul* tells the *Epheſians* of their *learning Chriſt* and *hearing him*, *i. e.* his Goſpel and Doctrine. *Ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be ye have heard him, and been taught by him*, or *i* in him, *Eph.* 4. 20, 21. *Heard him, and been taught by him*: *i. e.* not by his *perſon*, for he never went beyond *Judea*, *being ſent*, as he ſaid, *to none but the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*, Mat. 15. 24. and therefore never travelled ſo far as *Epheſus*; but by, and in his *Doctrine* or Religion. And this is a moſt uſual form of ſpeech, to call any *inſtitution* or *profeſſion* by the name of its *firſt Author*. The Doctrine and Religion which was delivered to the Jews by *Moſes*, is called by his Name. For S. *Paul* ſpeaks of *Moſes being read*, *i. e.* the Law of *Moſes*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 15. and of the *Iſraelites* being *baptized into Moſes*, *i. e.* the *Moſaick* Religion,

i ἐν αὐτῷ ἐδιδάχθητε.

1 *Cor.*

1 *Cor.* 10. 2. And our Lord himſelf tells the Jews in the Parable of the Rich Man, that they *have Moſes and the Prophets*, and bids them *hear them*, *Luk.* 6. 29. where he cannot mean their *perſons*, in regard they were dead long before, and got without the reach of their hearing; but their *Writings and Religion.*

And as *Chriſt* many times ſignifies the *Chriſtian Religion*, ſo is *being in Chriſt*, the very ſame with *being of his Religion*, or *being a Chriſtian.* Thus S. *Paul* tells us of *Andronicus* and *Junia*, who embraced the Chriſtian Doctrine, whilſt he perſecuted and oppoſed it, that *they were in Chriſt*, *i. e.* in Chriſts Religion, before him, *Rom.* 16. 7. They who dyed *in the profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith*, are ſaid to be *fallen aſleep in Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15. 18. *The veil of Moſes is done away in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 3. 14. *The veil of Moſes*, *i. e.* the types and obſcure ſhadows of the *Moſaical* Religion, are *done away in Chriſt*, *i. e.* by the plain clearneſs of the Chriſtian. Thus I knew a *man in Chriſt*, is no more than I knew a *Chriſtian man*, 2 Cor. 12. 2; and the *Churches of Judea in Chriſt*, are the very ſame as the *Chriſtian Churches among the Jews*, Gal. 1. 22. So when we read that *in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion; but a new Creature*, Gal. 6. 15; the meaning is only this, that what price ſoever the *Religion of Moſes* put upon this outward Rite of Circumciſion, and thoſe other Jewiſh obſervances whereof it was the federal undertaking: yet the *Religion of Chriſt* doth not regard them at all, but that all which can avail us *in it* is only a new Creature. And to the ſame ſenſe S. *Peter* ſpeaks of *a good converſation in Chriſt*, *i. e.* in Chriſts Religion, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16. And to name no more inſtances in a caſe ſo evident, we read not only of men, but likewiſe of bonds *in Chriſt*; *i. e.* of mens being bound for the Religion and Faith of Chriſt.

Chriſt. *My bonds in Chriſt,* ſayes S. *Paul, are manifeſt in all the Palace, and in all other places,* Phil. 1. 13.

But beſides this ſenſe of the words, our *being in Chriſt,* for our *being of the Chriſtian Religion*; there is another very near it, which it is pertinent to our preſent buſineſs to obſerve; and that is our *being in the Chriſtian Church.* Thus S. *Paul* ſays, that *we being many members, are* yet *one body,* or Corporation *in Chriſt,* or in the Society and Church of Chriſtians, wherein we are *every one members one of another,* Rom. 12. 5. And Gods gathering together all particular Chriſtians ſcatter'd over the world into *one Catholick Church or Society,* is called his *gathering together in one all things in Chriſt,* Eph. 1. 10. Thus our admiſſion *into Chriſts Church* by *baptiſm,* is called our being *engraffed or implanted into him. We have been planted together,* ſayes the Apoſtle, *in the likeneſs of his death*; or in Baptiſmal immerſion, which is a repreſentation of burial after death, *Rom.* 6. 5.

As for our *Being in Chriſt* then, which ſets us beyond the reach of danger and condemnation, it is the ſame as our *being of the Chriſtian Religion,* and *members of the Chriſtian Church.*

And this Communion and memberſhip of Chriſts Church, and profeſſion of his Religion, is a moſt ready and effectual means to make men practiſe and obey it. For to be in the Church of Chriſt, is to live under the preaching of his Word, the ſolemn return of Holy Prayers, the Adminiſtration of Bleſſed Sacraments, the counſel and direction of wiſe Guides, the Authority of good examples, the correction and diſcipline of Church Governours, and all the other outward means of Grace and Obedience. And then the profeſſion and owning of his Religion, if it be true and undiſſembled, implies our Faith and belief of it; which is

the

the great and only expedient that Chriſt could think of for the reformation of a wicked world; and which, as we have already ſeen, is a moſt effectual means and ſure principle of good life and practice.

And becauſe our *being in Chriſt*, *i. e.* our profeſſion of Chriſts Religion, and Communion and Society with Chriſts Church, is ſo powerful a principle of our obedient ſervice; therefore has God promiſed to it that Life and Pardon which is the inſeparable reward of Obedience it ſelf. He doth not in any wiſe intend that every man who bears the Name of Chriſt, and is of his retinue, that will make a bare profeſſion of his ſervice in calling of him *Lord, Lord*, without any real works and performance, ſhall have right to theſe Rewards when he comes to Judgment. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he only who doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. 7. 21. Nay, in the next verſe he goes higher, *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Have we not* done more than barely profeſſed thy Name, have we not done thee high and honourable ſervice, *viz. propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out Devils, and in thy Name done many wondrous works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you, depart from me*, you are no ſuch *k* Chriſtians as I own, for whatſoever your names and profeſſions be, *ye* are of their number *that* in their lives *work iniquity*, verſ. 22, 23. When God aſſures us by S. *Paul* therefore that there is *no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt*, or in Chriſts Church and Religion; he means to them that are ſo in them, as thereby to become obedient. He ſpeaks metonymically, and implies our works and actions, as well as that Communion and profeſſion which ſignifies them, and ought to produce them.

k *Nec Chriſtianus eſſe videtur, qui Chriſtiani nominis opus non agit.* Salvian. de Gub. l. 4. p. Ed. Ox. 96.

And in this the Scriptures are expreſs, *He that*

KEEPS

KEEPS his Commandments dwells in Chriſt, and Chriſt in him, ſays S. *John*, 1 Ep. 3. 24. It is nothing leſs than our fulfilling of his Laws who is head of that body whereunto we join our ſelves as members; and our being indeed what we pretend, and obeying the rules of that Religion which we profeſs, that will at the laſt day be interpreted for our *being in him* in ſuch ſort as qualifies us to be ſaved by him. *Whoſo KEEPETH his word*, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *in him is the love of God made perfect, and hereby*, by this perfection of love in Obedience, *we know that we are in him*: So that whoſoever he be *that ſaith he abideth in him*, he *ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk even as he walked*, 1 Joh. 2. 5, 6. The neceſſity of connexion between theſe two, *viz. being a member of Chriſts Church, and a good Man*; between *profeſſing of Chriſts Religion, and obeying it*; was ſo evident, and ſo well known and allowed of in the firſt times of Chriſtianity, that both were underſtood, when either was mentioned. To *put on Chriſt* in the Apoſtles days, was the ſame as *to make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. And *to learn Chriſt*, was but another phraſe for *to put off concerning the former CONVERSATION the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts; and to put on the new man, which after* the ſimilitude of *God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, Eph. 4. 20, 22, 24. A *Chriſtian* and a *keeper of Gods Laws*, were then only two words for the ſame thing. For they thought nothing could be a greater contradiction, than for a man to profeſs himſelf a ſervant of Chriſt, and yet to pay him no Obedience; to † *call him Lord, Lord, and not to do the things that he ſays*; to own the Name of a Chriſtian, and yet to lead the life of a Heathen. *The time paſt of our lives*, ſays S. *Peter*, or that time before we became Chriſtians, *muſt ſuffice*, us wherein *to*

† Luke 6. 26.

have wrought the will of the Gentiles, 1 Pet. 4. 3. But when once we have liſted our ſelves in Chriſts ſervice, and are *called upon by his Name*, we muſt renounce all our former ways, and *depart from all iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

So that in the language of thoſe *firſt times*, and in the meaning of the *Scriptures*, mens *being in Chriſt* is by no means ſeparate from *obedience*, but implies it. To talk of an *intereſt in him*, without *fulfilling of his Laws*, is but vain Cant and unprofitable ſpeech. It is to talk without Book, and to uſe a Scripture phraſe, but againſt the Scriptures meaning. For at the laſt day, when Chriſt comes to expound his own Goſpel, we ſhall hear him pronounce, what *it* has already in plain words declared to us, that no man is ſavingly *in Chriſt* who is *out* with his Laws; but that he only is ſo *in him*, as to be ſecure from all Condemnation, who has *kept* his Commandments and faithfully *obey'd* him.

CHAP. III.

Of Pardon promiſed to Repentance.

The Contents.

Of Pardon promiſed to Repentance, Regeneration, a New Nature, a New Creature. The Nature of Repentance, it includes amendment and Obedience. The Nature of Regeneration and a New Creature. Its fitneſs to produce Obedience. Some mens Repentance ineffectual. The folly of it. Pardon promiſed to Repentance and Regeneration no further than they effect Obedience. In the caſe of dying Penitents a change of mind accepted without a change of practice. That only where God ſees a change of Practice would enſue upon it. This would ſeldom happen upon death-

death-bed reſolutions and Repentance. The general ineffectiveneſs of this ſhown by experience. Two reaſons of it. 1. *Becauſe it proceeds ordinarily upon an inconſtant temporary principle,* viz. *nearneſs of Death and preſent fears of it. Though it always begins there, yet ſometimes it grows up upon a principle that is more laſting,* viz. *a conviction of the abſolute neceſſity of Heaven and a Holy Life.* 2. *Becauſe it is ordinarily in a weak and incompetent degree. All TRUE reſolution is not able to reform Men. Sick-bed reſolutions generally unable. Such ineffective reſolutions unavailing to mens Pardon.*

THIRDLY, That condition which the Goſpel exacts of us as the terms whereupon we muſt hope to find Life and Pardon at the laſt day, is oft-times called *Repentance, Regeneration, a New Creature, or a New Nature.* Chriſts fore runner, *John the Baptiſt*, came preaching *Repentance for the Remiſſion of ſins*, Luke 3. 3. And when Chriſt himſelf commiſſions his Apoſtles to publiſh his Goſpel over all the World, their inſtructions are to *preach Repentance and remiſſion of Sins in his Name to all Nations, beginning at Jeruſalem*, Luke 24. 47. And according to this order they practiſed. *Repent*, ſays St. *Peter* in his firſt Sermon, *and be baptized for the remiſſion of ſins*, Acts 2. 38. And again, *Repent that your ſins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. And then as for *Regeneration, a New Creature, and a New Nature*; they are ſuch qualifications as fit us for Eternal Life, and without which we ſhall never be admitted to it. It is, ſays our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, a mans *being born again* that muſt capacitate him to *enter into the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3. In *Chriſt Jeſus*, or the Chriſtian Religion ſaith S. *Paul*, *neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a NEW CREATURE*, Gal. 6. 15. The condition required of all

men to Life and Pardon, as *the truth is in Jeſus, is this, that they put off the OLD MAN, and be RENEWED in the ſpirit of their mind; and that they put on the NEW MAN, which after* the ſimilitude of *God is Created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, Eph. 4. 21,22, 23, 24.

Repentance, in the conſtant and plain notion of the Scriptures, is *ſuch a vertuous alteration of the mind and purpoſe, as begets a like vertuous change in the life and practice.* It begins in our *thoughts and reſolutions*, and is made perfect in our *works and actions.* It firſt caſts all falſe principles and fooliſh judgements of the deſirableneſs of ſin, and the dreadfulneſs of vertue; all opinions that hinder a good life, and encourage wickedneſs; all inveagling thoughts and bewitching imaginations; all firm purpoſes and ſtudied contrivances of evil *out of our minds:* and thereby purges all wickedneſs and diſobedience *out of our lives and actions.*

It implies a change of *mind*, as is well noted by the Greek * name for *Repentance*, which is very expreſſive of its nature. For it ſignifies an *alteration of the mind*, a *transformation of our thoughts and counſels;* and is the ſame that S. *Paul* calls a being *renewed in the ſpirit of our mind*, Eph. 4. 23. And this God expreſly calls for when he ſummons the wicked to *repentance*, Iſa. 55. *Let the wicked man forſake his thoughts, and turn* them from his ſin *unto the Lord, and* then *he will have mercy upon him*, verſ. 7.

* μετάνοια.

It includes alſo an alteration of the † *life and practice*, a *forbearing to repeat the ſin which we repent of.* And this is a natural effect of the former, in as much as our works and actions will ſtill go along with our ſtudies

† μετανοῶν ἐφ' οἷς ἔδρασεν ἀκ ἔτι ποιεῖ ἢ λέγει, βασανίζων δὲ ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτεν τῷ ἑαυτῷ ψυχῷ ἀγαθοεργεῖ. Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. p. 281. δύκησις μεταγοίας, ἡ μετάνοια, τὸ πολλάκις ἀλλοῖόδαι συμγνώμων ἐφ' οἷς πλημμελῆμεν πολλάκις. id. p. 282. ed. Lug.

and

and contrivances, our purpoſes and reſolutions. Now this part of *repentance* from ſin, *viz. a leaving* or *forſaking* of it, is its prime ingredient, and the chief thing which the Scriptures expreſs by it; it is the *main end*, whereto the former ſerves only as the *principle and inſtrument*. *Godly ſorrow*, or the grief and trouble of our minds for having offended God, *working*, as S. *Paul* ſays, that *Repentance* which will never fail us, nor ever need to be *repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. And that Repentance includes this alteration of our lives, as well as that other of our minds, the Scriptures plainly expreſs to us, when they ſtile it a *Repentance FROM dead works*, Heb. 6. 1. a *TURNING away from all tranſgreſſions, and doing that which is lawful and right*, Ezek. 18. 27, 30. *A CONVERSION FROM darkneſs unto light*, Acts 26. 18. a *putting AWAY the evil of our DOINGS, by ceaſing to DO evil, and learning to DO well*, Iſa. 1. 16, 17.

Theſe *two* changes, a change of *mind* and a change of *practice*, make up the eſſence, and integrate the nature of a ſaving Repentance. It implies firſt a change in our *minds* and *tempers*, and upon that a correſpondent change in our *lives* and *actions*.

Now as for the former of theſe, this change of our *minds* and *tempers* in *new thoughts, new counſels, new deſires* and *reſolutions*; this vertuous alteration both in our *wills* and *underſtandings* which are thoſe two powers that make up our *rational nature*, is that which the Scriptures call our *new nature*; the begetting of which in us is called our † *regeneration*, or our *being born again*. For the *tempers* and *inclinations* of our ſouls, are uſually in our common diſcourſe called our *nature*. A man of a *loving condeſcenſive diſpoſition*, is called a man of a *good nature*; and one of a *ſowr revengeful temper*, is called a man of an *ill nature*. And the

† *Noah's* preaching Righteouſneſs and Repentance before the flood, 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. and 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. is thus expreſſed by S. *Clem.* παλιγγενεσίαν ἐκήρυξεν. 1. Epiſt. ad Cor. c. 9.

the *change* from one to the other is called a *change* of Nature, a making of him a *new Creature*, and a *new man*. And thus we are daily wont to ſay of any perſon, who from wicked and ſinful inclinations is changed to a diſpoſition which is vertuous and holy, that he is become a *new* man. And as this is our language, ſo is it the Scriptures too. For our putting on the *tempers and habitual inclinations of righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, is called our putting on the *new man*, Eph. 4. 24. The alteration from an *unbelieving and uncharitable*, to a *believing loving temper*, to a *Faith that worketh by love*, S. *Paul* calls a *New Creature*, Gal. 5. 6. compared with *Chap.* 6. *verſ.* 15. And as for the *renovation* it ſelf, it is called a *regeneration* or *new birth*; the *Author* of it, a *Father*; and the perſons ſo *renewed*, his *Sons* or *Children*. All which are expreſſed to us by S. *John*. when he tells us of all thoſe which have received ſuch vertuous and holy diſpoſitions from God, as make them reſemble him and like unto him, that they are *the Sons of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. and *born of him*, 1 Joh. 5. 1, 4. In like manner as the *Diſciples of the Prophets* among the *Jews*, becauſe they received thoſe qualifications from their inſtitution whereby they were made like unto them, are uſually in the Old Teſtament called **Sons of the Prophets*.

* *Prophetarum Filii.* And in the like ſence among the Gentiles, *Poetarum Filii.*

Now this firſt part of Repentance, or this *inward change of mind and purpoſe*, which is called a *New Creature* and a *New nature*; is a moſt direct cauſe and natural Author of *a like change in our outward works*, and of an *obedient ſervice*. For it cuts off the very root of all Tranſgreſſion, and plants that of Obedience inſtead of it. It makes us now in obeying, to follow our own temper and inclination; and our doing of Gods will to become our deſire, as well as it is our duty. So that now when we perform Gods commands, we do nothing

nothing more than follow the natural tendencies of our own ſouls; our duty is become our choice and delight, and it is not without pains and difficulty that we can either omit, or tranſgreſs it. For it is an equal force and violence to a *renewed* and *obedient nature* to act ſin, as it is for a *wicked and debauched* one to work obedience. He whoſe nature carries him on to *love* and *pity*, can as hardly be *rigorous* and *cruel*; as he on the contrary can abſtain from *cruelty*, whoſe nature is *harſh* and *revengeful*. To act *againſt* nature any way is not without difficulty, and to *follow* it is always eaſie. And if it be changed from ſin and diſobedience, to obedience and holineſs; it is then as truly a *ſelf-denial* to tranſgreſs, as it was before to obey Nay if this alteration gets up to a full growth, and obedience become *perfectly* our nature: it is then not only *uneaſie*, but even almoſt *impoſſible* to ſin againſt it. For then we ſhall be arrived to that pitch which St. *Johns* words expreſs, when he ſays that *he who is born of God*, or formed into this new nature which makes him like unto, and comes from God, *CANNOT ſin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9.

So that if Obedience has got this hank of us, if by this *firſt part of Repentance*, *or this new nature*, it be engraffed in our tempers and inclinations; and become the employment of our thoughts, the deſire of our hearts, and the matter of our firm purpoſes and reſolutions: it cannot miſs of our works and actions. It has won the principles that command them; ſo that nothing more is needful to be done towards their procurement, but they will be ſure to follow after them.

Now becauſe *Repentance* in its whole nature implies Obedience as its chief ingredient; and becauſe the firſt part of it, *viz.* a *change of mind*, which is called a *new nature*, or a *new creature*, is ſo natural a principle, and ſo powerful a cauſe to work and effect it: therefore,

and

and upon no other reaſon, doth God in the Scriptures ſo far encourage them. He means not in any wiſe at the laſt day to acquit and reward men upon ſuch *repentance* and *new birth* as is void of *obedient works and actions*; but upon ſuch only as *include* or *effect* them.

'Tis true, indeed, the *wicked* and *diſobedient*, who will not *reform* and *obey*, but would notwithſtanding have *right* to Life and Pardon, call ſomething elſe *repentance*, which is void of all *amendment* and *obedience*. If they *confeſs their ſin*, and are *ſad upon it*, if they *wring their hands, and beat their breaſts*, and then, *giving it hard names and reproachful titles, beg God to forgive them*; they think they have done an acceptable ſervice, and *ſufficiently repented* of it. They take no care to *keep off* from it, provided they continue to *bewail* and *confeſs* it. For although they bring in before God *large Catalogues* of ſins, yet they never *ſtrive* to *leſſen* them. But when they profeſs to him how they have *deſerved* his wrath and Eternal judgment; they want nothing but opportunity ſtill further to *provoke* it. When they acknowledge how *vilely* they have *affronted* him in the breach of his Laws, they are ſtill ready to *repeat* it. All the hard names which they give their ſins, are falſe and forced expreſſions, they mean no hurt to them all the while. For although they *revile* them in their words, yet they *honour* and *applaud* them in their practice. They are ſtill in love with them at their next meeting, and for all the ill language which they gave them when they ſpake of them before God, they will embrace them upon the firſt occaſion, and repeat them upon every return of temptation.

But can any conſiderate man think that ſuch a Repentance as this ſhall avail him before God, and ſave him from periſhing when Chriſt comes to judgement? Surely

Surely he muſt know nothing, either of *Gods nature*, or of his *word*, who can be impoſed upon ſo groſsly. For God by the neceſſity of his very *nature* perfectly hates all ſin, and ſo can never be reconciled to any man barely for *telling* him that he is a ſinner. To inform him only that we have rebell'd againſt him, is to acquaint him that we are his enemies, whom, to vindicate himſelf, and the Authority of his Government, he ſhould deſtroy and ruine, not cheriſh and protect. The *Goſpel* declares that he will take ſevere and endleſs vengeance on all that dye unreformed, and finally diſobedient: and then to *own* our diſobedience to his *face*, without a true turn and a firm purpoſe of reformation, is to *bid* him maintain his Law, and execute his Sentence; to *provoke* juſtice, and not to *appeaſe* it; to *haſten* and *aſſure* our miſery, but by no means to *prevent* or *retard* it.

But that *Repentance* whereupon God will Pardon us, and that *Regeneration* which he will eternally Reward, is ſuch only as either *includes*, or *ends* in Obedience and reformation. When he graciouſly proclaims, that *whoſoever repenteth him of his former ſins, and is born again, ſhall be ſaved*; he means whoſoever doth the one, and is the other, and *obeys* with them. His ſpeech is *metonymical*, he intends obedience, and the thing implies it, although his words do not expreſs it. For all the while it is only a *repentance* which is *obedient*, and a *new Nature* that is *operative* which in the laſt judgement he will eternally reward, and pronounce for ever Bleſſed.

For of *repentance* he tells us plainly, how that which he means when he promiſes Life and Pardon to it, is ſuch only as implies a *forſaking in our works and actions* thoſe Sins which we repent of. It is a *Repentance FROM dead works*, Heb. 6 1. A *forbearing* to act

what we confeſs is evil. *They repented not*, ſays he, *of the works of their hands*, in making and worſhipping Idols, *that they ſhould not ANY LONGER worſhip them*, Rev. 9. 20. And becauſe it includes a *turn*, and a change of our works and actions, from Sin to Obedience; therefore is it expreſſed by *forſaking and* * *returning*. *Repent and TURN to God, and do works meet for Repentance*, Acts 26. 20. *Repent and turn from all your tranſgreſſions, and ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruine*, Ezek. 18. 30. For it is only *when the wicked man TURNETH away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed*, and in his works *DOTH that which is lawful and right*, that *he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive*, verſ. 27.

* Jer. 8. 6. So S. *Clement* uſes the words ἐπιστροφὴ and μετάνοια promiſcuouſly. μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐπιστραφῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν. And what in the Septuagint, whom he follows in Citations, is expreſſed by ἀποστρέψαι, Ezek. 33. 11. βιάσῃσθε θανάτου ἀσεβῆ· ὡς ἀποστρέψαι, &c. he, giving the ſence, though not the words, according to the Apoſtolical uſage, expreſſes thus, —— βιάσῃσθε θανάτου ἁμαρτόλον ὡς μετάνοιαν, Clem Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 7. 8. And agreeable to this, the compilers of our Liturgy in the Sentences before Morning Service in our Old Common Prayer Books, tranſlate *Matt.* 3. 2. *Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand*; thus — *Amend your lives, for the Kingdom*, &c. As on the other ſide, they expound *Ezek.* 18. 21. *If the wicked turn from all his ſins that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful and right*, &c. thus — *At what time ſoever a ſinner repenteth*, &c. And S. *Paul* calls his Preaching *Repentance*, his being *obedient to the Heavenly Viſion*, which bad him go *turn men from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*, Act. 26. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Let no man therefore think that he ever *ſavingly repents* of any *damning ſin*, ſo long as he *perſeveres to practiſe and repeat* it. His Repentance muſt *deliver* him from *ſin*, before it *reſcue* him from *ſuffering*; for 'tis then only *when the wicked man forſakes his way, and returns unto the Lord, that God will have mercy upon him and abundantly pardon*, Iſa. 55. 7.

And as for that *part of Repentance*, viz. *Regeneration, a New Nature, or a New Creature*; God tells us plainly that he accepts of them no further than they are principles of a new ſervice, and we obey with them. The *new Creature* in Chriſts Religion, is a being *Created*, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, *unto good WORKS, which God hath before*

before ordained for us that we ſhould walk in them, Eph. 2. 10. It is our *actions* which muſt evidence our *nature*; *the tree*, ſays our Saviour, *is known by its fruits*; ſo that we muſt either *make the fruit good as well as the tree is good*, or, *if the fruit be evil, the tree will be known to be ſo too*, Matt. 12. 33. *For do men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles? Even ſo good a tree CANNOT bring forth evil fruit, neither CAN a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: by their fruits therefore you ſhall know them*, Matth. 7. 16, 17, 18. Nothing leſs than a *good life* will be allowed, either by *God* or *Men*, for a ſufficient proof of a *good heart*; nor any thing below a *new Converſation* and Obedience, will paſs for a good evidence of a *new Nature*. *Doth a Fountain ſend forth at the ſame place ſweet water and bitter*, ſaith S. *James*; *can the Fig-tree bear Olive-berries, or a Vine Figs? Who is a wiſe man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let HIM ſhow out of a good CONVERSATION his works with meekneſs of wiſdom*, Jam. 3. 11, 12, 13. Let no man therefore dare to think himſelf *regenerate* and *born of God*, ſo long as he is *diſobedient*, and his *works* are *ſinful*. For *whoſoever is born of God doth not COMMIT ſin, becauſe his ſeed*, his new nature, *remaineth in him*; *and* through the determining power and ſtrength of that, he is almoſt come to this that *he cannot ſin*; it is become the bent of his nature to do otherwiſe, *he is born of God*, Joh. 3. 9. If any man therefore would paſs a true judgment upon his nature, whether it be the *new* or *old* Man; from *God*, or from the *Devil*; let him conſult his works and actions, thoſe undiſſembling effects of it, and from thence he may have a ſure evidence which will not deceive him. *For in this*, as S. *John* goes on in the next words, *is manifeſted who are Children of God, and who are Children of the Devil*;

whoſoever DOTH not Righteouſneſs is not of God, v. 10.

So that when Chriſt comes to judge us according to his Goſpel, we ſee plainly that no *repentance* will bear us out, nor any pretended *regeneration* or *new Nature* avail us unto life, but that only which either implies, or ends in our Obedience. For no man can with any ſhow of reaſon hope to be acquitted and rewarded at that Bar, but he that *repents unto amendment*, that is *Created unto good works*, and *is born again to a new practice and obedience*.

One caſe indeed there is, wherein a *new birth* will ſurely ſave a man without a *new practice*; and that is *when a man is forthwith called away upon the change, before any opportunities of action come*. Some men are liſted into Gods ſervice late, at the *eleventh hour of the day*, Matt. 20. 6. They have juſt time to become obedient in *will* and *purpoſe*, but not in *life* and *practice*; they have no leiſure left them to work in, but the night comes ſuddenly upon them, when all the time of labour is at an end. And this is the caſe of all *dying Penitents*.

And here indeed the *will* ſhall be accepted for the *deed*. For in heart and mind ſuch Penitents are become Gods honeſt ſervants; their deſires are in great ſtrength, and their inward purpoſes are come up to effectual degrees, that want nothing but time wherein to ſhow themſelves, and are ſufficient, whenſoever an opportunity ſhould occur, to beget a change of life, and to make their actions anſwer them. So that if they are deſtitute of an entire obedience, and have not as yet evidenced their change of nature in their change of practice; that is not for want of *inward readineſs*, but of *outward opportunities*; and therefore it is not ſo much their *fault* as their *unhappineſs*. And when God

ſees

ſees it is thus, he takes the inward will and choice, for the outward ſervice and performance. He judges us by our wills, which are in our own power; and not by chance and fortune, which are utterly without it. This he doth in evil actions, as ſhall be ſhown afterwards; the will in them is taken for the deed, and if once our hearts are effectually reſolved, and fully ſet upon them, in his account we are guilty of them, though by ſome intervening accidents we are hindred from committing them. And ſince as S. *Bernard* * argues undeniably in this matter, he is much more prone to pity than he is to puniſh, and had far rather interpret things to our profit than to our prejudice: we may be ſure that our obedient purpoſes ſhall have as much force to the full as our diſobedient have, and that an effectual will in them, when nothing but time is wanting to perform in, ſhall paſs for the deed likewiſe. God is by no means forward to ſeek our hurt, and to take advantages of our neceſſities; but in this, and all other caſes, where there is firſt an *effectually willing mind*, and nothing but opportunity is wanting to an anſwerable practice, he takes, as S. *Paul* ſays, the will for the deed, and *accepts men according to that* ſufficient and effectual deſire which *they have*; *and not according to that* outward performance, which through ſome unhappy and preventing accidents, *they have not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

And of this we have a clear inſtance in one *dying Penitent*, the *Thief upon the Croſs*. His return was late indeed, he begun not to befit himſelf for the next World, till he was in his departure out of this. His converſion was in his very laſt hour, under the pangs of Death, and at the inſtant of Execution. But when Chriſt ſaw that his change of heart was *true*, *full*, and *ſufficient*; and needed nothing but opportunity to ſhow it ſelf *effectual*; he tells him that it ſhould ſerve his turn, and

* *Quid planius quàm quòd voluntas pro facto reputetur, ubi factum excludit neceſſitas? niſi forte putetur in malo, quàm in bono efficacior inveniri voluntas apud Deum, qui charitas eſt, & promptior eſſet ad u'ciſcendum, quam ad remunerandum miſericors & miſerator Dominus.* Bernard. Ep. ad Hugonem de Sancto Victore, quæ eſt Ep. 77. p. op. 1458.

and ſecure his happineſs. Becauſe he would have been obedient in his practice if he had lived to it, he ſhall be rewarded at the laſt day as if he had. For *this very day*, ſays he, *ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, Luk. 23. 42.

Thus available, I ſay, a *new nature* and an *inward change* is, although it want an outward practice, when it is *ſufficient* and *effectual* to produce it, and would *certainly effect it*, if there were but *time* and *opportunity allow'd for it*.

But then here is the *dangerous* ſtate and *deplorable* caſe of all ſuch dying Penitents, that 'tis twenty to one, if they defer repentance to their death bed, that all the change which then appears in them is not ſo *ſufficient*, nor would, were there a due time allow'd for it, prove ſo *effectual*. And of this we have a clear argument, in that among all the *holy vows* and *pious purpoſes*, which are begun by men upon a *ſick bed*, when they are in ſight of death and expect a diſſolution; there are ſo few that continue with them, and prove *effectual* to make their lives and actions anſwer them, when they *recover*. There is not, I believe, one unconverted Chriſtian in five hundred, but will ſhow ſome ſigns of ſorrow, and put up devout Prayers, and make holy vows and purpoſes when he apprehends himſelf about to dye: and yet of all them who are raiſed up again, 'tis a very ſmall and inconſiderable number that make good thoſe vows, and effect what they had reſolved upon. And now if theſe men had dyed when they thus repented, in what a miſerable ſtate had they been! For this change in their will and *purpoſe* is no further *available* to their *Salvation*, than it would be *effectual* to a like change in their *lives* and *practice*. God accepts the *holineſs* of the *mind* only as it is a *holy principle*, and imputes the *reward* of *obedience* to it no farther

farther than he foreſees, that if he allow'd time, *obedience* would *enſue* upon it. The *will* is never taken for the *deed*, but when it is able to *effect* it, when the deed would be ſure to follow ſo ſoon as an opportunity were offer'd for it. And this God ſees before hand, although we do not: he is able to judge of the ſincerity of mens deſires, and of the ſufficiency of their purpoſes before their following works declare them. And according to what he foreſees they would afterwards effect; he either accepts, or rejects them. But when mens after-works come as a clear evidence of the inſincerity, or inſufficiency of their ſick bed reſolutions; they may ſee plainly themſelves, what God ſaw long before, that all the change of mind, which was *then* wrought, was utterly inſignificant and unavailing. When they truſted to it, they relyed upon a broken reed; their confidence upon it was ill grounded, and if they had dyed with it, it would moſt certainly have deceived them.

Thus utterly uncertain and uncomfortable a thing is a mere unworking change, and a late death-bed Repentance. It may *ſometimes* prove ſufficient to beget an after-change of practice, and when God ſees it would, he will undoubtedly accept it. But it very *ſeldom* doth, and no man who dies in it can poſſibly tell whether it would or no. It is very great odds that it would prove too weak; ſo that although there be *ſome*, yet is there very ſmall hope that any dying man can place in it.

And that which renders it ordinarily ſo inſufficient, and thereupon ſo uncertain and uncomfortable, is either,

Firſt, Becauſe it generally proceeds from an *unconſtant, temporary principle*: Or,

Secondly, Becauſe, when the *principle is genuine and laſting*, it is ſtill too *weak*, and *in an incompetent meaſure* and *degree*.

1. That

1. That penitential grief and change of mind which is wrought upon a Death bed, is *ordinarily* ineffective, and inſufficient to produce a *conſtant* change of life and practice, becauſe it *generally* proceeds from an *inconſtant and temporary principle.* It is commonly founded upon a reaſon that doth not hold in all times, a reaſon that is good in ſickneſs, but not in health; that concludes for a Pious change, whilſt we are under our ſick-bed ſorrows; but not when, being freed from them, we come under the pleaſure of temptations. For the great and general motive which makes all thoſe who never thought of reforming in all their lives before, to reſolve upon it when they are on their Death-bed; is plainly the *nearneſs* of the next world, and their apprehenſion of their *ſudden death* and departure. Could they hope to live longer, they would ſin ſtill. But they look upon themſelves as going to Judgment, and they have ſo much Conſcience left in them, as to believe that there is a Hell for the impenitent; and their own ſelf-love is extreamly ſtartled at that, and makes them run to any ſhelter: So that they make many fearful confeſſions, and fervent Prayers, and Holy purpoſes, and ſay and do any thing whereby they may quiet their preſent fears, and catch at any comfortable hopes of avoiding it. The ordinary cauſe then of all this work, is not any *love* of God, or *hatred* of Sin; but only a *fear* of Puniſhment. And that too not a *fear* of it at a *diſtance*, and as at ſome removes from them; but only as *near* at hand, and juſt hanging over them. But now as for this apparent *nearneſs* of Death, and this *confounding* fear upon it; it is plainly a *ſhort* and *tranſient*, an *unconſtant*, *temporary* Principle. It is a reaſon to them no longer than they are *ſick*; for when they *recover* and are well again, Death is as *far* off, and they are become again as fearleſs as ever

ever. They are got out of its neighbourhood, and it gives them no further trouble: So that all their former fears abate, and their vertuous reſolutions fall, as beginning now to want that which firſt gave life to them, and ſhould ſupport them. And now when opportunities of Sin are offered, and the pleaſurable baits of Temptations invite; they have nothing left that is able to reſiſt them. Whilſt they were *ſick*, they were not *capable* to be tempted; and then Death being *near*, it enabled them to purpoſe well, and to make a pious reſolution. But now, ſince they are *well*, Temptations are become as ſtrong as ever; and the thoughts of Death being *far* removed, they have no reſolutions that can withſtand them, but are quickly changed again into the ſame men, as *ſenſual* and *ſinful* as they were before.

Indeed it ſometimes happens, that thoſe ſouls which were at firſt awakened by ſuch a *tranſient*, *temporary* motive; go on to others afterwards, that are more *fixt* and *laſting*: and then they are furniſhed with Armour in all times, and have a motive that may bear them out when Death is *far* off, as well as when 'tis near at hand; in time of health, as well as in time of ſickneſs. For they who were at firſt affrighted into a change of mind and holy purpoſes, by the near approach of Death and Judgment, go on ſometimes to confirm their reſolutions upon more laſting principles. They think themſelves into a deep ſenſe *of that ingratitude towards God which is in Sin, and of its miſchievouſneſs to their own ſelves; how it robs them of all that Eternal Good which their hearts deſire, and brings them under all thoſe inſupportable and endleſs evils which they fear: all which it doth for the purchaſe of ſome light, empty and tranſient Pleaſures, which are vaſtly below the joys of Heaven; and for the avoidance of ſome ſhort pain and uneaſineſs, which are*

infinitely nothing in compariſon of the Pains of Hell. And theſe thoughts give them a firm and laſting conviction of the utter neceſſity of renouncing all evil courſes, which are ſo deſtructive; and of leading a holy and obedient life, which are ſo infinitely becoming them, and beneficial to them. And this conviction now can *beget* and *preſerve* a reſolution that is ſufficient and effectual, victorious and prevailing. It will be a reaſon to them to reſolve and practiſe at all times, in ſickneſs and in health; when they are not tempted, and alſo when they are. For Heaven and the Love of God is always a neceſſary end, and the Obedience is always a neceſſary means or inſtrument. So that if Men reſolve upon a conviction of this neceſſity, they reſolve upon a reaſon that may well hold always. They will conſtantly have the higheſt reaſon to be ſo convinced; and ſtill to repeat and fortifie their reſolution upon ſuch conviction; and to act and practiſe that which they have ſo wiſely reſolved. And when a Sick mans change is built upon this ground, and proceeds upon this motive; it may be permanent and fixt, effectual and prevailing. As it is in all thoſe who are Converted by Sickneſs and Afflictions, that *great*, and uſually *laſt* means which God makes uſe of for the reclaiming of ſinful Men.

But generally Mens ſick-bed purpoſes go no further than the *firſt* ground. They *always* begin upon the fears of preſent Death, and the near approach of Judgment; and though *ſometimes* they go higher ſtill, yet *ordinarily* they reſt there; ſo that they have no change longer than their ſickneſs laſts. And this *Repentance* is certainly *inſufficient*; this *will* can never be accepted for the *deed*; becauſe if they were allow'd to recover again, and to live on till an opportunity of Doing came, the good will and purpoſe would be quite loſt, and able to effect nothing.

But

But although a Death-bed change ſhould proceed upon both theſe grounds, and the dying men ſhould reſolve to amend, both *upon the ſenſe of ſudden Death*, which will maintain their reſolution ſo long as it is near, and alſo *upon a conviction of the abſolute neceſſity of Heaven and a Holy Life*, which may make them reſolve ſtill when the preſent danger is over: yet may their Repentance after all be inſufficient and avail nothing. For a Death-bed Repentance, when it doth proceed upon a *genuine and laſting* motive, is ſtill oft-times ineffectual, becauſe the *change* is,

2. In too *weak*, and *incompetent a meaſure and degree*. It is not every degree even of *true* and *undiſſembled* reſolution that will overcome a mans Luſts, and ſtrengthen him to ſuch a pitch, as to make him prevail over all Temptations. A thouſand good reſolutions go to Hell, becauſe, although they are *ſincere* and *true*, yet they are *weak* and *ineffectual*. For how many men are there who reſolve againſt their ſins, who do not yet get quit of them? They purpoſe to leave them; but for all that they live ſtill in them: their mind and will is againſt them; but yet they continue to work and practiſe them. When once men have got *violent luſts*, and *vicious habits*, and Sin by a *long uſe* is become almoſt a *ſecond nature* to them: it is not every *meaſure*, no nor every *moderate degree* of reſolution that can mortifie and overcome them. For a *weak* reſolution is quickly overthrown, mens Luſts are too hard for it, and quite overbear it: it may make ſome reſiſtance, create ſome trouble, and cauſe ſome delay; but that is all that it can do: it can only contend and ſtruggle, but it is not able to overcome. This is plain from every Religious Mans experience; and this S. *Paul* ſets down expreſsly in his character of the *unregenerate ſtriver* in the *ſeventh* Chapter of the *Epiſtle* to the *Romans*. For there

was a real change in his *mind*, without a change in his *practice*; a *reſolution* without *effect*; and a *will* without *performance*: the *violence of his Luſts* was too hard for the *convictions of his Conſcience*, and led him Captive, even againſt his *will*, into a courſe of Sin and diſobedience. *With the MIND*, ſays he, *I ſerve the Law of God, but with the FLESH the Law of Sin*, ver. 25. *What I DO, I ALLOW not; for what I WOULD that I DO not; but what I HATE, that I DO*, ver. 15. 19. *To WILL is preſent with me, but how to PERFORM that which is good I find not*, ver. 18. *For the Law of my MEMBERS wars againſt the Law of my MIND, and brings me into CAPTIVITY to the Law of Sin*, v. 23.

Thus weak and unable, ineffective and idle, are many true and real reſolutions. They have not ſtrength enough to do their work; the oppoſition is greater than they can overcome; ſo that they are able to make no alteration, but for all this *change of mind*, men will continue *wicked* and diſobedient in their *practice* ſtill.

And of this ſort *generally*, even when they proceed upon a *genuine* and *laſting* motive, are the Penitential purpoſes of Dying men. For, alas! when Men have lived all their Lives in a courſe of Sin, and their minds have been always taken up with it, and their hearts wholly enſlaved to it: it is no eaſie matter to bring them off, and to fill them with ſuch firmneſs of purpoſe, and ſtrength of pious reſolution, as would be able effectually to mortifie and ſubdue it. This is a moſt laborious work, and a difficult undertaking. It requires much *time*, and the *freedom* of all our faculties. For how hard a thing is it, even for men in *health*, when their *thoughts are free, diſtracted by no buſineſs, interrupted by no pain, and diſturbed by no diſeaſe or other hindrance*, to work themſelves up to an effectual and pre-

prevailing reſolution againſt *any one* Sin, which they have been habitually inured, and for a long time enſlaved to? And even of them who do at laſt *effectually* reſolve againſt it, how few are there who came to ſuch a pitch of reſolution at the *firſt tryal?* No, their proceeding is *gradual*, they go on from ſtep to ſtep; every following reſolution is more firm, and ſtronger than that which went before; till after ſeveral repetitions and advances, they arrive at laſt to a degree and pitch of holy purpoſe ſo *compleat*, as can *effect* that vertuous change of *life* and action which they aim at. So that their *ſpiritual* Life is not brought on to perfection in a moment, more than their *natural*; but requires much *time*, and much *exerciſe*: for as their ſinful habits were not at firſt *acquired*, ſo neither are they to be *conquered* by *one* action, but by *many*. And ſince the proceſs in Repentance, even from *one ſingle* Sin, is ſo *long* and tedious ere it has arrived to a *ſaving* pitch, and ſo difficult to a *healthy* man, who has nothing to *trouble* and *diſtract* him: what muſt an *univerſal reformation* be to a *dying* perſon, whoſe time is *ſhort*, and much *diſturbed*; who cannot repeat *many* reſolutions, nor make a tryal of the force and power of *any one*, and who is moſt likely to be *weak* and *languid* in all thoſe good purpoſes which he makes, by reaſon that his *thoughts are heavy, and his attention broken, and all his faculties are oppreſſed with pain, and become weary and unactive through a waſting Diſeaſe?* Surely if the *firſt reſolutions* of *healthy Men* are *generally* ſo ineffective and inſufficient; theſe purpoſes of *dying Penitents*, which in all *advantages* for a *ſtrong* and *prevailing* reſolution fall much *below* them, muſt needs be generally of this ineffective ſort too.

And when they are ſo, they ſtand us in no ſtead in Gods account, but are *utterly unavailable* to any mans

Salva-

Salvation. A man who only *purpoſeth*, but doth not *practiſe*; who barely *wills*, but is not able to perform; is in the *way to life* indeed, but he is far from having yet *attained* to it. He is ſtill in a ſad caſe, and under a *damning* Sentence. For he is, as S. *Paul* ſays in that *ſeventh* Chapter to the *Romans*, where he deſcribes him, *ſlain by Sin*, v. 11. It *works death in him*, v. 13. he is yet under, as the *Law of Sin*, ſo *the body of Death* too, v. 24. But the change of *mind* which God requires of us, is ſuch as works a change of *practice*. If he ſees it *ſufficient* to effect that, he accepts it indeed before the effect follows: he takes the *will* for the *deed*, when he ſees the will is ſo ſtrong as that upon any fit occaſion it would produce it; and upon this account he accepted the *dying Thief*, Luk. 23. 42. But if it be only an *impotent* and *ineffective* will, and he diſcerns plainly that no obedient works would *follow* it: it is no ſuch *will* as he rewards, and for ſuch Penitents, he will by *no means* abſolve, but utterly condemn them.

And ſince the change of mind and penitential purpoſes of *dying* perſons, even when they are upon *genuine* and *laſting* grounds, ſo as in the following parts of a mans life, if God ſhould pleaſe to ſpare him, they would do *ſomething*; would yet be *weak* and *inſufficient*, and ſo unable to do *enough*: here is ſtill a further reaſon of the *ordinary* inſufficiency of ſuch Repentance, and why thoſe *dying* men will not *ordinarily* be ſaved by it, but periſh notwithſtanding it.

To conclude this point then, we ſee that 'tis *poſſible* for ſuch *New birth* to ſave a Man, as has not yet produced a *New practice*; and for dying Penitents to be accepted upon a *change of mind*, without a like *change of life and actions*. This I ſay is *poſſible*, it *ſometimes* is, and ſometimes has been done: but this indeed is very *rare* and *ſeldom*, ſo that no Man in his ſober wits, who has time

time before him, will dare to truſt to it. And the ſum of all is this, That to men who are ſo unhappy as to be brought into it, it has, as is expreſſed in * *Salvians* determination, juſt *ſo much hope* as may excite a good endeavour: but to men who are yet out of it, it is *altogether ſo deſperate*, as utterly to diſcourage all delay.

* *Quid dicam neſcio, quid promittam penitus ignoro; revocare ab inquiſitione ultimi remedii periclitantes, durum & impium; ſpondere autem aliquid in tam ſera cautione, temerarium.* Salv. de Avaritia, l. 1. p. 363. Ed. Oxon.

CHAP. IV.

Of Pardon promiſed to Confeſſion of Sins, and to Converſion.

The CONTENTS.

Of Pardon promiſed to Confeſſion of Sins. The nature and qualifications of a Saving Confeſſion. Its fitneſs to make us forſake Sin. The ineffectiveneſs of moſt mens Confeſſions. The folly and impiety of it. Pardon promiſed to Confeſſion no further than it produces Obedience. Of Pardon promiſed to Converſion. The nature of Converſion. It includes Obedience, and is but another name for it.

Fourthly, That condition of Life and Pardon which the Goſpel indiſpenſably exacts of us, and whereupon at the laſt day Chriſt will accept and reward us, is ſometimes called *Confeſſion* of our Sins to God. When we acknowledge them, God will be ſure to pardon them; he has engaged his word and faithfulneſs for

* Levit. 26. 40. 42.

for it, and ſo cannot recede from it: *If we * confeſs our Sins*, ſays S. *John*, *God is juſt and FAITHFUL to forgive us our Sins*, 1 Joh. 1. 9.

Now as for this *Confeſſion* of our Sins, whereupon God promiſes mercifully to forgive them, it is not a bare *naming* of them, or giving in an *Hiſtorical Catalogue* of them to Almighty God, that he may *know* them and be informed of them. No, he ſees all our thoughts afar off, and our actions long before. We cannot inform him when we lay open our tranſgreſſions before him; for we could never find any place wherein to act them ſo retired, but it was under his eye; nor any time and circumſtances ſo ſecret, as to eſcape his knowledge. So that our Confeſſion cannot be to *inſtruct him*, but only to *ſhame*, and to *humble*, and to work other effects in our *own ſelves*. And therefore it muſt not be a bare *recital* of ſuch offences as we have committed; but an acknowledgement *duly qualified*, and accompanied with ſuch *tempers* of mind, as will lead us on to *forſake* and *amend* them.

It is a Confeſſing of them with *ſhame*, with an humble debaſement, and ſenſe of our unworthineſs, who could ever be ſo vile as to be guilty of them. And ſuch was *Ezra*'s Confeſſion, *Ezra* 9. *O my God*, ſaith he, *I am ASHAMED and bluſh to lift up my face to thee my God, for our iniquities are increaſed over our head, and our treſpaſſes are grown up unto the Heavens*, v. 6.

It is an acknowledgment of them with *hatred* and *deteſtation*, as things that are utterly *odious* and *loathſome* to us, which therefore we are prone to *fly from*, as from what is moſt *offenſive*. And ſuch is that Confeſſion whereunto God directs the *Jews* by his Prophet *Ezekiel*, *Ye ſhall remember your ways*, ſaith he, *and all your doings wherein ye have been defiled; and ye ſhall LOATH your ſelves in your own ſight for all your*

your evils that you have committed, Ezekiel 20. 43. It is a recital of them with *ſorrow* of mind, and a *troubled heart*; with ſuch *pain* as we uſe to feel in thoſe things which moſt *afflict* us: which therefore we are forward *to avoid*, as what creates the greateſt torment. And ſuch was that of S. *Peter*, who when he *remembred*, and made mention of his Sin to God, *wept*, ſaith the Text, *bitterly*, Mat. 26. 75. And of *David*, who tells us in the 38. *Pſalm*, that when he *declares* to God *his iniquity*, he will *be SORRY* for his Sin, *v.* 18.

It is a Confeſſion of them, with a *reſolution*, upon all this ſhame and ſorrow which we have undergone for them, never more to be reconciled to them, or to repeat, and act over them again. A Confeſſion of the *mouth*, that is accompanied with a *turn* and change of the *heart*, which is now ſet as much againſt them, as formerly it was inclined to them. And ſuch was that Confeſſion which Wiſe *Solomon* durſt recommend to Gods mercy, and beg him to accept of for mens Pardon and Forgiveneſs. *If they Repent* ſaith he, *and ſay we have done perverſly, we have committed wickedneſs: and ſo RETURN unto thee with all their hearts, and all their ſoul: then hear their prayer, and forgive thy people that have ſinned againſt thee, and all their tranſgreſſions wherein they have tranſgreſſed*, 1 Kings 8. 47, 48, 49, 50.

It is ſuch an acknowledgment of our Sins, laſtly, as *undoes*, ſo far as is poſſible, all that which we had *done wickedly*; and makes all juſt and ſufficient recompence and *ſatisfaction* for them. And this is that acknowledgment of all Sins of injuſtice, which God himſelf preſcribes. *When a Man or Woman*, ſaith he, *ſhall commit any ſin* of injury and wrong, *that men commit* one againſt another, *to do a treſpaſs* thereby *againſt the Lord, and that perſon be guilty: then ſhall they con-*

feſs their Sin that they have done, and ſhall RECOMPENCE *their Treſpaſs with the principle thereof*, or the thing it ſelf which they took away wrongfully, *and ſhall add* moreover *unto it a fifth part* more *thereof, and give it unto him againſt whom they treſpaſſed*, Numb. 5.6,7.

Now a Confeſſion of our Sins thus *qualified, viz.* a Confeſſion of them *with bluſhing and being aſhamed of them; with an implacable hatred and loathing indignation of them, with bitter ſorrow for them; with firm purpoſe and reſolution againſt them, and with all poſſible endeavours to undo them by making juſt recompence and ſatisfaction*: A Confeſſion, I ſay, thus attended is a moſt natural cauſe, and powerful principle of our *leaving* and *forſaking* them. The *four* firſt concomitant tempers, are all moſt *effectual cauſes* of better obedience and reformation; and the *laſt, viz. making of ſatisfaction*, is an *inſtance* and *effect* of it. *Shame*, and *ſorrow*, and *hatred*, are the great rules and meaſures of what we ſhall *forſake*, the prime ſprings and directors of all *averſation* and *avoidance*. Nothing is more natural for us, than to be ſlow to do that we are aſhamed of; to avoid what we hate; to turn away from that which grieves and torments us. So that if once diſobedience fall under theſe paſſions, it has loſt all its intereſt, and will ſurely be excluded from the ſervice of our works and actions. Our paſſions oppoſe it, and our wills are ſet againſt it: and when both theſe are not only got looſe from it, but alſo moſt reſolutely contend with it; it is wholly bereft of all its power, and can do nothing in us. We have no temptation to purſue it further; we are weary of it, and offended at it, and ſo are ſure to leave and forſake it.

And becauſe this Confeſſion, thus qualified and attended as we have ſeen, is ſo genuine a cauſe of better

ter obedience and reformation: therefore alone it is that ſo great things are ſpoken of it. When God ſays, *he that confeſſes his ſin ſhall find mercy*, he means *he that confeſſes and forſakes it*, that acknowledges his offences in ſuch ſort, as to renounce them and become obedient. His ſpeech is *metonymical*, he implies Obedience, although he doth not mention it. For no Confeſſion of ſin will ſerve any mans turn at the laſt day, except he leave it, and in his life and actions bid adieu to it.

The world indeed, abounds with another ſort of Confeſſion, which coſts leſs, and effects nothing. They confeſs their ſins without *ſhame*, and relate them without *ſorrow*, and name them without *hatred*; they recite them to God without *reſolving* againſt them, and acknowledge them daily without any *amends*, or making any recompence and *ſatisfaction* for them. For they cannot but be hardned againſt *ſhame*, who day by day, if not ſeveral times every day, have the face to tell God that they have rebell'd againſt him; and yet never endeavour to come with another ſtory, by diſavowing and forſaking their Rebellion. They muſt needs be void of ſorrow for ſin, who will never keep back from it: it cannot but *pleaſe* them, ſo long as they continue to purſue it. For they would not continually repeat their pain, and at every turn act over again their own torment and vexation. It is beyond all doubt that they do not *hate* but entirely *love* diſobedience, ſo long as they ſlip no opportunities of acting it. They are plainly *reſolved* upon it, whilſt they are moſt firmly fixt, and forward to embrace it. And ſince notwithſtanding all their hideous Confeſſions, they ſtand ready ſtill to cloſe with their Sin upon the firſt meeting, and to repeat what they confeſſed upon the next occaſion; it is plain that their *hearts* were never againſt it, whatever their words were. They

only ſhewed their wit, but not their paſſions or perſwaſion; they declaimed againſt it, but all the while they meant no hurt to it. For even whilſt they inveighed againſt the *baſeneſs*, the *loathſomneſs*, the *deſtructiveneſs* of their Sin; their own heart did not believe it. They did no more but ſpare God their *tongues*, and *ſpeak* what *he* pleaſed: but for their *ſouls* and *actions*, they reſerved them for their Luſts, and would *like* and *do* what they pleaſed *themſelves*.

But can any man be ſo blind as to think, that ſuch a *Confeſſion* of Sins as this can in *any wiſe* pleaſe God and procure his Pardon? Has he any kindneſs for our Sins, that he ſhould take delight to hear them ſpoken of? Are they ſo acceptable a ſervice, that we may hope to gain his favour barely by reciting them in his preſence? No, he hates them as things that are moſt loathſome to him, and will not endure to have them mentioned without real deteſtation. Is any man ſo weak as to think that he *honours* God, merely by *reckoning* up his own offences? That he gives *glory* unto him by declaring to his face how vilely he has affronted and deſpiſed him? To Confeſs *thus*, is to * reproach him to his face, and boldly to defie him. It is a telling of him that we have diſobeyed, and are reſolved to go on in it: an open profeſſion and avowing of our Rebellion, without any real ſigns or approach to amendment and due ſubjection. It is a trangreſſing bare-faced, an addition of *impudence* to *ſin*; a continuing daily to Rebel againſt him, and yet coming as daily into his very preſence to declare and own our continued Rebellions. And this now is not to ſupplicate, but to defie; not to beg peace, but to declare enmity; it is by no means the way to ſoften and appeaſe, but a moſt effectual courſe to exaſperate, and implacably to provoke him.

* *Novum monſtri genus, eadem pene omnes jugiter faciunt, quæ feciſſe ſe plangunt, & qui intrant Eccleſiaſticam Domum ut mala antiqua deſleant, exeunt ut moliantur--- Et ſic oratio eorum RIXA eſt magis Criminum, quam exoratrix.* Salvian de Gub. l. 3. p. 89. Ed. Oxon.

But

But then to go on ſtill further, and to *pretend* to him that we are *ſorry* at our heart, and *loath* our ſelves for having ſinned againſt him, and are *reſolved* to do ſo no more; when *really*, as our after-actions (which are the trueſt interpreters of our hearts and minds) declare, there is no ſuch thing: this is to add *mockery* to *ſin*, and a *freſh affront* to our *former diſobedience*. It is moſt groſsly to play the *hypocrite*, and in the moſt loathſom faſhion to *diſſemble* with him. It is an endeavouring to put *tricks* upon the Almighty; a tryal of his *skill*; a ſeeking to delude and impoſe upon an *infinitely wiſe* and *all-ſeing God*, by ſuch *thin pretences* as cannot but be ſeen through and diſcovered by any *ordinary Man*. But let no man vainly deceive himſelf, for God is not mocked; nor can all the arts of Earth and Hell out-wit and go beyond him. No, he ſees clearly through all this hypocriſie, and he will moſt ſeverely puniſh it. And when he comes to judge of mens Confeſſions at the laſt day, he will then, in the face of all the world, diſtinguiſh *reality* from *complement*; and *acknowledgement of Repentance*, from one of *form and cuſtom*; and will for ever reward the *firſt*, whilſt he puniſhes Eternally the latter. He will Pardon no Confeſſion of our Sins at that day, but only ſuch as is *ſorrowful*, *penitent*, and *obedient*; we muſt amend thoſe faults that we confeſs, before we can with reaſon hope that he will accept us.

And for this the Scripture is clear. It is only our *returning* upon Confeſſion that ſhall be rewarded and forgiven. *If they Repent*, ſays *Solomon*, *and SAY*, *we have done perverſly*, *we have committed wickedneſs*; *and ſo RETURN unto the Lord with all their heart and all their ſoul: Then HEAR their Prayer*, *and forgive thy people that have ſinned againſt thee*, 1 King. 8. 47, 48, 49, 50. And to name but one place more, theſe words

words of *Solomon* are full and home to the purpoſe, *He who Confeſſes, and FORSAKES his Sin ſhall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

That Confeſſion of our Sins then whereupon Chriſt our Judge will at the laſt day accept and Pardon us, is ſuch only as ends in Reformation and Obedience. The ſervice of our lives muſt go along with that of our lips; we muſt do as we ſay, and avoid what we condemn, before we can ſafely truſt, that God will Sentence us to that Mercy and Life, which are not the rewards of *idle* acknowledgements, but only of a confeſſing *obedience*.

Fifthly, This Goſpel condition of Life and Pardon is ſometime call'd *Converſion*. Without this we can have no hopes of happineſs, *For except ye be CONVERTED*, ſays our Saviour, *and become as little Children*, as void as they are of all former impreſſions and courſes, and free to enter upon new ones, *ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 18. 3. But if our Converſion goes before, Gods Pardon is ſure to follow after; that being the duty, and this the reward. *Repent, and be CONVERTED*, ſays the Apoſtle *Peter*, *that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. Converſion ſets us without the reach of Death, and beyond the precincts of Damnation; for *he who Converts a Sinner from the error of his way, doth ſave a Soul from DEATH*, James 5. 20.

Now our *Converſion from Sin to God*, is nothing elſe but our *Obedience* in another word. For it denotes a *turn* and a change, not only of our *wills* and *deſires*; but withal, and that principally, of our *works* and *actions*. For our *courſe of actions* is in the familiar, and cuſtomary uſe of the Scriptures call'd our *way*; our *Converſation*, *walking*; and our *particular actions*, ſo many *ſeveral* ſteps: and our *turning out* of a courſe of Sin *into a courſe*

of

of Righteouſneſs, being like the turning out of a wrong way into a right, is call'd our *turning from* Sin, and our *turning to* God, *i. e.* in one word our *Converſion*. So that to be *Converted*, is nothing elſe in the Scripture language but to have the *courſe* of our works or actions turned, and from *workers* of ſin, to become *workers* of obedience.

When Mercy and Life then are promiſed to our Converſion; they are not made over to any thing which is ſeparate from Obedience, but to that only which denotes it, and is but another name for it. We are not *Converted* until we *obey*; ſo that Obedience ſtill is that which muſt procure our peace, and capacitate us for Pardon and happineſs when Chriſt comes to judge us.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Pardon promiſed to Prayer.

The CONTENTS.

Of Pardon promiſed to Prayer. Of the influence which our Prayers have upon our Obedience. Of the preſumption or idleneſs of moſt mens Prayers. Of the impudence, hypocriſie, and uſeleſsneſs of ſuch Petitions. Then our Prayers are heard, when they are according to Gods will: when we pray for Pardon in Repentance, and for ſtrength and aſſiſtance in the uſe of our own endeavours. Pardon promiſed to Prayer no further than it effects this Obedience, and penetential endeavour.

Sixthly, That condition whereto the Goſpel promiſes a gracious ſentence of Mercy and Life, is ſometimes call'd *Prayer*, or *calling upon God*. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him*, ſays *David*, *to all that call upon him in truth*, Pſal. 145. 18. *Thou Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee*, Pſal. 86. 5. For ſo ſurpaſſing is his goodneſs and the riches of his grace, that any thing may be had of him for *asking*; to them who *deſire* it, he can *deny* nothing. *Ask, and it ſhall be given you*, ſays our Saviour, *for* EVERY *one that asketh receiveth*, Matt. 7. 7, 8. And that in *all* things equally, one as well as another, if they do not diſtruſt him and *diſbelieve* his Love. *For* ALL *things,* WHATSOEVER *you ſhall ask in Prayer* BELIEVING, *you ſhall receive*,

ceive, Matth. 21. 22. So that if men want any thing which they deſire that God would beſtow upon them, it is becauſe they do not *beg* it of him. *Ye have not*, ſayes S. *James*, *becauſe ye ask not*, Jam. 4. 2. For not only the *overflowing goodneſs of Gods own nature*, but, beſides that, the *intereſt of his Son Jeſus Chriſt* our *MEDIATOR* at his right hand, gives us a full ſecurity in all our requeſts, that we ſhall obtain any thing which we ask in his name. *Ask any thing*, ſayes he, *in my name, and I will do it*, Joh. 14. 14. Nay, ſo dear is he to Almighty God, that although he himſelf ſhould not move in it, yet through the ſtrength of Gods inexpreſſible love to him, they who beg in his name can miſs of nothing. *In that day*, ſayes he, after I am taken from you, *you ſhall ask ME nothing: Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever you ſhall ask the FATHER in MY NAME, he will give it you. And I ſay not that I will PRAY the Father for you, for the Father himſelf loveth you, BECAUSE ye have loved me*, Joh. 16. 23. 26, 27. And *ſeeing*, as the Apoſtle ſayes, *that we have ſo great* and powerful a *High Prieſt at Gods right hand*, whether our ſuit be for pardon, or ſtrength, or for whatſoever elſe; *Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain Mercy* for pardon of paſt ſins, *and find grace* to prevent future, and to *help in time of need*, or in the moſt *a* fitting ſeaſon, *Heb.* 4. 14, 16.

a εἰς εὔκαιρον βοήθειαν.

Now our *Prayers* and *calling upon God*, are a mighty *means* and *inſtrument* of our *ſerving* and *obeying him*. And as all the forementioned means had a *natural* fitneſs and tendency, to make us *do* the will of God: ſo have our *Prayers* a *ſupernatural*, and help us to *fulfill* the Divine Laws, not ſo much through any efficacy of their *own nature*, as through the aids of *divine grace*. For we have great difficulties to conflict with, and great hindrances to overcome in the *doing* of our duty. There

is much hardſhip in a holy courſe to make us *unwilling*; and if we have a will to it, we yet find much weakneſs in our ſelves that renders us *unable* to continue in good living, and to perform conſtantly all thoſe good things which God has commanded us. For we have much ignorance of what we ſhould *do*, and much other buſineſs beſides it: and as for that moreover which we do know, we are apt many times to forget it; or through the throng of other things, through ſuddenneſs, and ſurprize, not to conſider of it when we ſhould uſe it; or when in our minds we do clearly ſee it, yet full often we cannot bring over our wills to chuſe and embrace it. For our luſts and paſſions prove many times of more force with our wills, than our reaſon and Religion; and we are either born down by the weight and ſtrength, or wearied with the tedioufneſs and length of a temptation.

And now to ſupply all theſe defects, and to ſupport us in the doing of our duty notwithſtanding all theſe infirmities, we have an abſolute neceſſity of the help and aſſiſtance of Gods grace. We want the *good timeing* of his *providence*, to have temptations aſſault us when we are beſt able to overcome them, and our duties ſtay for us when we may moſt eaſily perform them. We ſtand in need of the *ſuggeſtions of his ſpirit* to cure our forgetfulneſs; of the *aids of his grace* to enlighten our minds, and clear up our notions, and bend our wills, and eſtabliſh our reſolutions; and ſo to make us *unmoveable* in a good courſe. So that we have an utter neceſſity of his help, both in the diſpoſals of his *providence*, and in the concurrence of his *ſpirit*, to enable us to obey his Laws, and make us, as S. *Paul* ſayes, *both to will, and to do what he requires of us*, Phil. 2. 13.

But now it is our Prayers which bring all theſe *di-*

vine

vine aids down unto us. They obtain for us a *good providence*, and a *powerful ſpirit*, which in ſpite of all our natural weakneſſes ſhall work out our Obedience. God will not deny us theſe when we ask them. For, as our Saviour argues unanſwerably, *If ye being EVIL will* yet *give GOOD gifts to your Children: how much more ſhall your heavenly Father*, whoſe *GOODNESS* infinitely exceeds yours, and who cannot be tainted with any of your *ILNESS*, *give the HOLY SPIRIT*, that beſt of gifts, *to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. And ſince our Prayers procure ſuch a never failing aid, and ſo Almighty an aſſiſtance for us; they muſt needs be a certain cauſe and inſtrument of our active ſervice and obedience. They imply *in us* an hearty deſire of having, and fetch down *to us* a ſufficient power of doing our duty, and keeping Gods Commandments. And when there is both a preparedneſs in us to uſe, and a readineſs in God to give us grace ſufficient with it to do his will, there is nothing further wanting to our performance of it.

And foraſmuch as our Prayers imply the one, and procure the other; becauſe they fetch down Divine aids, and expreſs our forwardneſs to obey with them: therefore have they ſo much favour ſhewn them, and Life and Pardon promiſed to them. For God never intends to reward an *idle* and *unobeying* Prayer, but ſuch only as is *induſtrious* and *obedient*. Our Prayers muſt firſt make us do what he *commands*, before they obtain thoſe mercies for us which he *promiſes*. For when he tells us that they who *call upon him ſhall find favour and mercy*, he ſpeaks *metonymically*, he includes obedience, although he doth not expreſs it. He means them only who *pray for* b *mercy and pardon*, and *obey* in order to it; and

b Such were the old Jewiſh forms of Prayer for *PARDON*, whether with Sacrifice, or without it: with Sacrifice—— *Obſecro, Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci; nunc autem POENITENTIAM ago, ſitque hoſtia hæc expiatio mea.* Without Sacrifice—— *Obſecro, Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci; nunc mei me facti POENITET, PUDETQUE, neque unquam ITERUM ad id REVERTAR*, as they are cited out of *Maimonides* by the famous Dr. *Outram* in his Book *de Sacrificiis, l. 1. c. 15.*

who *ask for grace and ſtrength*, and *work* with it after it is granted. No prayers are of any account with him but the prayers of the obedient; ſo that if ever we expect to be ſaved by them at the laſt day, we muſt obey with them.

The Prayers indeed which are generally offered up to God, have little of this in them. For if men pray for *mercy* and *pardon*, they take no care to come furniſhed with *Repentance* and *Obedience*, which is that indiſpenſable condition whereupon the Goſpel doth encourage us to ask and hope for Pardon. And if they pray for any *vertue* or *grace*, they expect it ſhould drop into them without any *endeavours* of their own, and will take no pains to *cooperate* with and *uſe* it. Their prayers for *Mercy* are generally *preſumptuous*, and their prayers for *Grace unendeavouring* and *idle*. Obedience all the while is the leaſt in all their thoughts, and has the leaſt of all their care. For their petitions are all put up for *pardon*, whilſt they *continue* in their *ſins*; or for *vertue* and *grace*, whilſt they *put* forth no endeavours. All their Religion is only to be often upon their knees, to keep up Prayers in their Families Morning and Evening; to ſend up a great many *Lord forgive me's*, *Chriſt help me's*; they are a *praying* and *deſiring*, but not a *working* and *obeying* people. They are of a ſordid niggardly Religion, which would receive all, and give nothing: their petitions look altogether on the *reward*, but quite overlook the *duty*; they would take all from God, but do nothing for him.

But this is ſuch a way of praying as will moſt certainly delude men, but can never do them good. It is inconſiderate hope and downright folly to expect that ever God ſhould hear our prayers for Pardon, whilſt we continue in our ſins. For ſince he has ſo *frequently*, ſo *plainly*, and ſo *peremptorily* declared, That at the laſt

laſt day he will Pardon none but the *penitent* and *obedient*: it is *impudent incredulity* to beg pardon, whilſt, without any amends, we *continue* to *ſin* and *diſobey*. It is to deſire of him that he would *break his word*, that he would Pardon and *acquit* us, when his Goſpel *condemns* us. It is to beg of him that he would frame *another* Religion, and *another* Law than that of his Son Jeſus; a Religion that would *ſave* us, when that *kills* and deſtroyes us. By ſuch asking forgiveneſs from him, whilſt we go on in *rebelling* againſt him, we do as good as deſire that he would ceaſe to be *governour* of the world, and *leave* us to our own ſelves; that we might have no *law* but our own *wills*; that we might *do* what he *forbids*, without *undergoing* what he *threatens*. We only ask *leave* to ſin; and crave a *liberty to tranſgreſs*, without *ſuffering*; and deſire that *we* might *break* his *Laws*, but that *he* would not *puniſh* us. And what man now *dare* preſume, that ſuch *ſhameleſs* deſires as theſe ſhould be granted to him? That God ſhould *deſert* his *Laws*, and *alter* his *Religion*, and *caſt* off his *government* over men, when they *requeſt* it? For in *very deed* we ſee, that *to deſire him to forgive us, whilſt we are going on in our ſins*, is in effect to put up all theſe frontleſs, and abominably impudent petitions to him.

And then as for the other ſort of petitions, our *asking for any vertue or grace, without putting forth any endeavours after it*, it is as certain to meet with no good anſwer as the other. For to pray thus, is plainly to play the *hypocrite* with God Almighty, and flatly to *diſſemble* with him. It is to *beg* what we do not *care for*; to *ask* what we *refuſe*; to *pretend deſire* (for all praying is deſiring) for that which we account is *worth no endeavour*. And what a miſerable piece of falſhood is this now, when a man makes his actions moſt palpably to give

give the lye to his words? He tells God that he *earneſtly deſires* his help to work in him a *pure heart*; but yet he will *do nothing* for it, nor avoid the leaſt occaſion of *uncleanneſs*. He *begs* his grace to aſſiſt him to a *meek*, and *patient ſpirit*: but when he is off his knees his work is done, for he never after *uſes* any *means to procure it*, or takes any care to *nouriſh* and *preſerve* thoſe degrees of it which he hath already. Surely any man of common underſtanding muſt needs ſee, that ſuch deſires as theſe were never in his heart, but only from the teeth forward. In reality he cares not what becomes of the graces which he has prayed for, and was no farther concerned about them, than that he might be able *barely to ſay* that he had asked them. Or at beſt, if he did deſire them at all; yet was his deſire far from that degree which he pretends; it was a *weak wiſh*, rather than a *deſire*; an imperfect inclination, that could effect nothing. It may be he had *rather have* that grace which he asks, than *go without it*; but he had *rather want it*, than *be at any pains for it*. He loves and deſires the leaſt eaſe, far more than the vertue; and is reſolved to keep that, although he loſes this. So that although he do think the grace which he prayes for to be worth ſomething, yet he eſteems it next to nothing; he judges it to be worth no pains, and deſerving no endeavour, and ſo has either no deſires of it at all, or ſuch weak and feeble ones, as are juſt as good as none.

Yea it is well if many times his heart is not *ſet againſt* thoſe very graces that he begs whilſt he is asking of them, which is more than barely being *unconcerned* for them. For how often doth it happen that a man prayes for *charity*, whilſt he is in love with *malice*; that he begs *ſobriety*, whilſt his heart is upon *drunkenneſs*; that he asks *juſtice*, whilſt his affections hanker after *deceitfulneſs*

neſs and *wrong?* This, in very deed, is the caſe of *moſt*, if not of *all impenitent* and *wicked* men. For they love their Sins, and reſolve to continue in them; and yet even then pray for ſuch Graces as are contrary to them. Now here it is plain that their *heart* doth not go along with their *tongues*: they are not willing to *loſe* that, which they pray to God they may *leave*; and are afraid to *receive* that, which they beg to *have*. They only *pretend* deſire, but are *poſſeſſed in truth* with hatred and averſation.

And then as for all the *good promiſes* which they make to God in their Prayers, *viz. That if he will forgive them, they will never do ſo any more; but become new men, and watch more carefully, and ſin more ſeldome, and obey more conſtantly and univerſally*; ſo long as their Prayers are thus *unendeavouring* and idle, all this is but *meer wind*, *vain hypocriſie*, and *deceitful talk*. For if, when their prayers are over, they take no care ſtill to perform that obedience which they promiſed whilſt they were at them; is it not clear to every eye that all is cheat and falſhood, and that they lye and diſſemble in theſe their *promiſes*, as well as we ſaw they did in their *profeſſions?* All their engagements are ſtark naught, they meant no ſuch thing whilſt they made them, nor ever after think upon them to make them good and fulfill them.

And can any man now be ſo intolerably weak and ſhamefully blind, as to imagine that God ſhould reward ſuch *idle talk*, as all theſe unendeavouring prayers for grace are, and give a bleſſing upon ſuch *hypocritical din and feigned language?* To diſſemble thus with God Almighty, is not to *honour*, but to *abuſe* him: and ſo fits us, not for any expreſſions of his *love*, but only of his *wrath* and *indignation*. It is to *paſs affronts*, inſtead of *begging kindneſs*; to make a *mockery* of his

condeſcen-

condeſcenſions; and to turn that *ſacred* and *ineſtimable liberty*, which he has graciouſly indulged mankind, of *making known their deſires to him for a ſupply and ſatisfaction of them*, into a *fraudulent trick* and *opprobrious couzenage*. And ſince all theſe *unendeavouring prayers for Gods grace*, are an *hypocriſie* ſo *groſs*, and a *mockery* ſo reproachful; we muſt needs conclude that he will utterly reject *them*, as well as our *prayers for pardon whilſt we continue in our ſins*; and inſtead of granting and fulfilling, deride and avenge them.

But if ever we hope to have our Prayers heard, the *true* and *only* way is to obſerve S. *John*'s rule, of *asking only what is according to Gods will. For this*, ſayes he, *is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us*, 1 Joh. 5. 14. And what that will of God is concerning any of thoſe things which we have to pray for; we can learn no where but from his Holy Goſpel. Now in that we are plainly told, that as for *Pardon*, his peremptory will is, That no man ſhall meet with it but he only who has Repented and obeyed him. *REPENT*, ſayes S. *Peter*, *that your ſins may be blotted out*, Acts 3.19. And *except you REPENT*, ſayes our Saviour, *you ſhall all Periſh*, Luk. 13. 3. For when we are all brought to Chriſts Tribunal at the great day, to be there Eternally acquitted or condemned; we are taught in the moſt expreſs words, that *Judgement ſhall paſs upon every man according to his WORKS*, Rev. 20. 12, 13. So that if we would ask *pardon* and forgiveneſs according to *Gods will*, and in ſuch ſort as he has promiſed to grant it, and we may juſtly hope to receive it; we muſt deſire it in *c Repentance*, and in true *reſolutions* and readineſs to *obey*. And then as for *ſtrength* and *grace* to enable us to overcome any ſin, and to perform any vertue; we are expreſly informed that his *will*

c ἱκέται γενόμενοι τῆ ἀληθεῖ αὐτοῦ βουλήσει ἀπερείσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς τοῦ οἰκτιρμοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἐπελιπόντες τὰ ματαιοπονίαν, τίνα τέρψιν, &c. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 9.

will is to grant it to ſuch perſons only, as *endeavour* after thoſe graces which they pray for, and are careful to *exerciſe* and *work with* them. God will not beſtow *new grace* upon us, till he ſee that we have made good uſe of what he has beſtowed *already*. We muſt improve thoſe *talents* which have formerly been entruſted with us, before he will think us qualified to receive more. For ſo we are taught in the *Parable* of thoſe Men who had received the *talents*, *Mat.* 25. As a concluſion whereof, we have this laid down as a *rule* of divine diſpenſations: *To him that hath*, *i. e.* hath wrought with, and made uſe of that talent of grace which was granted to him, as *thoſe ſervants* had done who are mention'd *v.* 20. 22. *to him ſhall be given* ſtill more, *and he ſhall have more abundance: But from him that hath not*, *i. e.* hath not exerciſed and improved that wherewith he has already been entruſted, as that wicked Servant had not done, who had hid it, *v.* 25. ſo far is he from receiving more, *that*, like as it was from the *idle unworking ſervant*, verſ. 28. *from him ſhall be taken even what he hath*, verſ. 29. And in that very place where S. *Paul* tells us, that *God worketh in us both to will, and to do*; he acquaints us moreover that the way whereby he doth that is, by bleſſing our *own endeavours*, and giving ſucceſs to our *own working*; and accordingly uſeth it as an argument thereunto, *work out your own Salvation*; and doubt not but you will be able to go through with it, *for it is God that* proſpers your endeavours, and, by giving ſtrength and ſucceſs to them, *worketh in you both to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. So that if we would ask *grace* and *ſtrength* according to Gods *will*, and in ſuch ſort as he will grant them; at the time of Praying we muſt *ſincerely reſolve*; and when our Prayer is over, we muſt *carefully* and *honeſtly endeavour* after them. An * *effectual* * Jam. 5. 16.

deſire

deſire ſhall ſerve our turn; and a *working Prayer* ſhall procure a bleſſing: but beſides it no other will.

Whatever therefore vain and wicked people may imagine; there is no Prayer that will avail them when obedience is wanting. If we pray for *pardon* and *mercy*, God will by no means hear us unleſs our *hearts* are *penitent*, and our *lives obedient*. And in our Prayers for *forgiveneſs*, we muſt pray for *obedience* too. We muſt beas ſollicitous for the *doing* of our *duty*, as for the *receiving* of our *reward*; and never in our Prayers omit to ask for that, which Chriſt thought fit to give us as the higheſt inſtance of thoſe things which we are to pray for, *viz.* the *Holy Spirit*, Luk. 11. 13. And when we do pray for that, or for any particular graces of it; we ſee that we have not done our work barely by *deſiring* it, till we go on alſo to *endeavour* after it. We muſt *reſolve* when we pray to ſeek that grace which we ask for; and we muſt *effectually labour* after it, in the diligent uſe of all thoſe means whereby it is either acquired or encreaſed, when our Prayer is over. All the way it is only our obedience which can effectually recommend our prayers; ſo that whenſoever we ask for any thing, if we would have any juſt hope of receiving it, we muſt be ſure to obey with it.

And for this the *Scriptures* are expreſs and plain *If I regard iniquity in my heart*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *the Lord will not HEAR me*, Pſal. 66. 18. And God himſelf ſays the ſame by his Prophet *Iſaiah* in words moſt full and forcible. *When you ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when you make many Prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Waſh you, make you clean, put away the EVIL of your DOINGS from before mine eyes, ceaſe to DO evil, learn to DO well; ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow.* When you have done this, you are

fit

fit to be hearkned to, *come now and let us reaſon together*; pray for Pardon, and I will forgive you, and *though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be white as ſnow*, Iſa. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18. So long as men *perſiſt* in their *ſins*, it is in vain for them to hope that God ſhould ever accept their Prayers. For *he that turns away his ear*, ſaith the Wiſe Man, *from HEARING the Law; even his PRAYER ſhall be an abomination*, Prov. 28. 9. But if any man would have his *Prayers granted*, he muſt take care to have his *life obedient*. For *the eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous*, ſaith S. *Peter*, *and his ears are open to THEIR Prayers*: but the *FACE of the Lord is againſt them that DO evil*, 1 Pet. 3. 12. The acceptableneſs of a Chriſtians Prayers, conſiſts as S. *Paul* intimates, *in lifting up holy hands*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. Before *God* will *Pardon* any man upon his Prayers, *Chriſts Goſpel* muſt *abſolve* him; it muſt *promiſe*, before God *perform* with him. No man has any other aſſurance that he ſhall receive what he deſires, but his having done what God commands. *If my words abide in you*, ſays our Saviour, *you ſhall ask what you will, and it ſhall be Done unto you*, Joh. 15. 7. And *whatſoever we ask we receive of him*, ſays S. *John, becauſe we KEEP his Commandments, and DO thoſe things that are pleaſing in his ſight*, 1 Joh. 3. 21, 22.

And by all this it clearly appears, that no Prayers will *avail* us unto *life* and *pardon* at the laſt day, unleſs we *keep* Gods Commandments, and obey with them. There is no *grace* to be obtain'd without *endeavours*; nor any *pardon* to be purchaſed without *obedience*. God will not *hear* us, if we refuſe to *hearken* unto him. Nothing can maintain a good underſtanding betwixt God and us, but only the *DOING* of our duty: upon this condition he will grant us any thing, but without it we can procure nothing. So that after all it is only our Obedience which can make our Pray-

ers available; and if ever we expect that God ſhould grant them, we muſt be ſure to work and obey with them.

CHAP. VI.

Of Pardon promiſed to our fear of God, and truſt in him.

The Contents.

Of Pardon promiſed to our fear of God, and truſt in him. Of the influence which mens fears have upon their endeavours, and how they carry on ignorant minds into Superſtition, but well informed judgments to Obedience. Of the influence of mens truſt in God upon their Obedience. The ineffectiveneſs of moſt mens truſt. Of the preſumption and infidelity of ſuch confidence. That Pardon is promiſed to fear and truſt ſo far only as we obey with them.

SEventhly, That condition whereupon we ſhall be Eternally accepted at the laſt day, is ſometimes call'd our *fear of God*, and ſometimes our *truſt* and *hope* in him.

As for our *fear* of God it is made the great means of our Pardon and acceptance. *I will teach you the good and right way* to your bliſs and happineſs, ſaid *Samuel* to the Iſraelites; *only fear the Lord, and* in vertue of that fear, *ſerve him*, 1 Sam. 12. 24, 25. This fear has given right to pardon in all times, and will eternally ſecure it.

it. For *Gods mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation*, Luke 1. 50. *From everlaſting to everlaſting*, Pſal. 103. 17. So that well might *Solomon* ſay, *The Fear of the Lord is a Fountain of life*, Prov. 14 27. and that he *ſurely knew it will go well with them that fear the Lord*, Eccleſ. 8. 12. Pſal. 115. 11, 13.

And then as for our *Hope*, or *Truſt* in God; great things are ſpoken of it. *Bleſſed is he*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *who maketh the Lord his Truſt*, Pſal. 40. 4. He is ſecure from all effects of his wrath and anger; for the Lord *taketh pleaſure in them that hope in his mercy*, Pſal. 147. 11. In particular, our *relying on Chriſt* and *confiding in him* for our pardon and eternal ſalvation, is ſaid to be that which will never fail or deceive us. For *he that* hopeth or *believeth on him*, ſays S. *Paul*, *ſhall never be aſhamed*, by a miſplaced confidence or expectation, *Rom.* 10. 11.

Now our *fear* of God, and our *hope* or *truſt* in his mercy, are of all our paſſions the moſt active Cauſes and powerful Springs of our good works and obedience.

As for our *fears*, no paſſion puts us upon ſo much pains and induſtry as they do. They make us act to the utmoſt of our power, and do all that is to be done to get protection from that evil which excites them. For fear has the deepeſt root in our natural *ſelf-love*, and deſire of our own preſervation; being raiſed in us by the nearneſs of ſuch things as either utterly deſtroy, or in ſome degree impair it. And therefore in them the activity of our ſelf-love is ſhown to the utmoſt; as vehemently as we deſire, and endeavour to preſerve our ſelves and our own eaſe; ſo vehemently muſt we deſire, and endeavour likewiſe to remove the matter of our fears, which hangs over us to deſtroy, or to torment us.

The moſt natural effect of *fear* then, is a moſt *vigorous endeavour* by all means to remove that evil, which we are afraid of. And according as this may be done *ſeveral ways*;

ways, ſo doth our paſſion of fear exert it ſelf after *ſeveral manners*. If we think the evil may be *conquered*, it puſhes us on to *fight* and *ſubdue* it. If it be *above our ſtrength*, but may yet for all that *be avoided*; it puts us upon all means of *concealment* or *eſcape*; and makes us ſeek either to *lie hid*, or to *fly from* it. But if there is neither any proſpect of *withſtanding the power*, nor of *eſcaping the eye* of him who is ready to inflict it; as there never can be when God, who is both *Almighty* and *Alſeeing*, is the Perſon feared; then it hurries us on by all means to *regain his favour* and good will, that thereby we may *prevent* it. And in Times of *Ignorance*, when men had great *fears* and little *knowledge*, when they were grievouſly afraid of God, but knew not what things he loved and delighted in, nor wherewith they might pleaſe him; this fear of God put them upon all the *nonſenſical ſervices*, and *fooliſh propitiations of Superſtition*. But where God has *plainly and clearly revealed his will*, and manifeſted to all that it is their *obedience* alone that can *continue* them in his favour, or *reſtore* them to it after they have loſt it: here the only effect of fear, muſt needs be that which is known to be the only means of favour, *viz.* our *keeping his Commandments*, or obedience. So that our fear of God is a moſt ſure principle and effectual means of our ſerving and obeying him.

And then as for our *hope*, or truſt in Gods mercy, it is a moſt natural cauſe of our *doing* our *Duty* likewiſe. For all *hope* implies both *deſire*, and a *likelihood* of getting that which is deſired; which *two* are all that is at any time needful to make us vigorouſly endeavour after it. For if men will be at no pains for a thing, it is either becauſe they have little or no deſire of it, or no probability of ſucceeding in it. But when once they are puſh'd on by an *eager deſire*, it is only *deſpair* that can

can dull their endeavours in purſuit of it. So that if we *hope* for mercy, we ſhall be at ſome pains for it, and by an active ſervice and obedience ſeek to procure it.

Indeed when the good thing that is hoped for needs no labour of ours but our naked *truſt* and *reliance* is all that on our ſides is required to it; our *hope* will effect no endeavour after it, becauſe none is neceſſary to obtain it. But as for that *eternal life* and pardon, which Chriſts Goſpel propoſeth to our hopes; they are offered us only upon certain *Terms* and *Conditions*, and will never be attained by us, without our *Service* and *Obedience*. And ſeeing *obedience* here is the *neceſſary means* to the acquiſition of that which we *deſire*, the ſame *deſire* and *hope*, which carries us on towards *mercy* and *life*, muſt ſpur us on withal to works of *duty* and *obedience* alſo. They muſt be a Spring of induſtry and good endeavour, becauſe they make us reſolve to procure that, which is not to be got without them.

And in regard our *fear* of God, and our *hope* or *truſt* in his *mercy*, are ſuch powerful Principles of our *obedience* to his Laws; therefore are *Pardon* and *Life* which are the rewards of *Obedience*, ſo frequently *promiſed* to them. God never intends to reward an *idle fear*, or an *unactive* and *careleſs truſt*; but ſuch only as are *induſtrious* and *obedient*.

'Tis true indeed the generality of men have taken up a dangerous errour, eſpecially in the latter of theſe, and are bold and preſumptuous in their *hopes* at the ſame time that they are moſt wicked and diſobedient in their lives and practice. They find no ſervice of their own works wherein they may be confident, and therefore they fly from them to Gods Goodneſs. They know this full well by themſelves, that *they* are *wicked*; but they know withal, that *God* is *gracious*, and their *hope* is, that He will be *merciful* to them *notwithſtanding their ſins*.

ſins. They find themſelves *condemned* indeed by his *Goſpel*; but their truſt is to be *relieved* by his *Nature*; they are *puniſhable* and wretched by his *Laws*, but they expect to be *ſaved* by his *pity* and *kindneſs*. The Revelations of his Word, 'tis true, breath out nothing to them but Death; but their hope is, that he will be better than his Word, and that through the infiniteneſs of his mercy, they ſhall at laſt be adjudged to pardon and eternal life.

But ſuch *bold hopes* and *preſumptuous confidence* as theſe, are the ready way to *provoke* and *offend God*, but by no means to *atone* and *appeaſe him*. For thus to *hope in his Mercy* againſt the *plain Declarations of his Will*, is to caſhier thoſe meaſures of life which he hath given us, and, by uſurping the place of Judg and Governour of the World, to make others of our own. It is plainly to oppoſe his *Eſſence* to his *Goſpel*, by making *it bleſs* thoſe whom *this condemns*, and to become *Infidels* to his *Religion* and *Truth*, under *colour* of *promoting his Mercy* and *Goodneſs*. It *reproacheth his Nature* under a *pretence of Honouring* it, by making his Vertues enterfere, and his Excellencies inconſiſtent, and robbing him of one moſt glorious Attribute, to exalt another. But when he comes at laſt to judge the World, he will effectually aſſert the truth of his Goſpel, and vindicate the Honour of his injured Attributes, in paſſing a juſt cenſure, and inflicting a moſt ſevere puniſhment on all ſuch blaſphemous preſumptions as theſe are. For it is not an *idle truſt in God*, or *ineffective recumbency and reliance on Chriſt for ſalvation*, that ſhall avail any man at that Day. No, if they have deſpiſed his Laws, and their lives are diſobedient, let them be as preſumptuous as they pleaſe with God, and as bold as they will with their Saviour, they ſhall certainly go to Hell in the midſt of all their high flown hopes and daring confidences.

fidences. For God will be as good as his Word, and puniſh diſobedience according as he has threatned it. It is not only in his *Word*, but in his very *Nature*, that he hates and abhors ſin: ſo that he can never be brought to reward and encourage it, being determined by his *Natural Inclination*, as well as by the Truth of his Goſpel, eternally to puniſh and avenge it. *He is not a God*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *who hath pleaſure in wickedneſs*; no, as an Argument of that, he will not endure it in his Preſence, *Evil ſhall not dwell with him. The fooliſh*, or diſobedient, *ſhall not* be ſuffered to *ſtand in his ſight*, for *he hateth all the workers of iniquity*, Pſal. 5.4,5.

No man therefore muſt dare to place his *hope* and *truſt in God*, till in his *works he honeſtly obeys him*. It is only our *doing* what he requires, that can give us ſufficient grounds to *expect* the performance of thoſe mercies which he promiſes. A *faithful obedience* is the only firm foundation of a *ſure Truſt*, we muſt keep his Commandments, before we can ſafely confide in him.

When God ſays then that he who *fears the Lord ſhall be bleſſed*, and that he who *truſts* and *hopes in him ſhall not finally be aſhamed*; he ſpeaks not of ſuch *fear* and *truſt* as are *ſeparate* from obedience, but of ſuch only as are conjoined with it. The Phraſe is *metonymical*, our obedient works are implyed, although they are not expreſly mentioned; for we muſt *obey* him through *fear*, and *do* what he commands us in *hopes* of obtaining thoſe mercies which he promiſes, or elſe we ſhall never attain thoſe bleſſings which we hope for.

And for this the Teſtimonies of the Scriptures are *many* and *plain*.

For as for our *fear of God*, it is of no account with him further than it makes us obedient. *The fear of the Lord*, ſays *Solomon*, *is to hate evil*, Prov. 8.13. It muſt be an inſtrument of amendment and reformation; a

fear whereby men depart from evil, Prov. 16.6. A means of *perfecting* our obedience and holy living; for that is S. *Paul*'s Character of it, when he tells us of *PERFECTING holineſs in the fear of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 7.1. and of *WORKING out our own SALVATION with fear and trembling*, Phil 2.12. It is only when obedience thus follows upon our fear, and is effected by it; that God accepts and rewards it. *I will teach you the right way* to pardon and happineſs, ſaid *Samuel*, *Fear the Lord*, and, together with that, *SERVE him*, 1 Sam. 12.24,25. For if we would *hear the concluſion of the whole matter*, as ſaith the Wiſe Man, we muſt *fear God, and keep his Commandments*; *this* obedience and fear together *is the whole Duty of man*, Eccleſ. 12.13. No man therefore can lay a juſt claim to Gods mercy at the laſt day; but he who has fear'd him in ſuch ſort, as out of that religious fear intirely to obey him. But whoſoever fears ſo, mercy ſhall reſt on him for ever. For *the mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting on them that fear him*, provided that out of that fear they *keep his Covenant, and his Commandments to DO them*, Pſal. 103.17, 18.

And then for our *truſt* and *hope in* Gods *mercy*, it is no *ſaving truſt*, but a *blaſphemous and bold preſumption*, if we hope in him whilſt we are diſobedient and rebellious againſt him. A good mans *truſt* is only in *promiſed* mercies, which are never made to ſuch as wilfully and impenitently tranſgreſs Gods Laws, but only to thoſe who honeſtly obey them. It is a truſt, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *in Gods Word*, and not againſt it, *Pſal.* 119.42. And becauſe that word denounces nothing but woes and threatnings to all wicked men, therefore, as he ſpeaks in another place, *ſhall the righteous* alone *truſt in him*, Pſal. 64.10. The hope of a Chriſtian is not *abſolute*, but ſuſpended upon his performance of certain terms;

terms; a hope upon his active ſervice and obedience. So that whoſoever has it, and expects not to be diſappointed in it, muſt *purifie himſelf*, as S. *John* tells us, 1 *Joh.* 3.3. Diſobedience, ſo long as men continue in it, is a moſt *deſperate* and forlorn Condition, there being no juſt hope to any man but in *well-doing*. It is, ſays S. *Paul*, *in teaching us to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live godlily, ſoberly, and righteouſly in this preſent world*, that the Goſpel encourages us to *look for the* fulfilling of our *bleſſed hope*, Tit. 2. 12, 13. And the way to *hold faſt the confidence and joy of* a juſt *hope* in Chriſt *firm unto the end*, he informs the Hebrews, is only by *hearing*, and thereupon obeying *Gods voice, and not hardening their hearts*, as the *Iſraelites* did, *in the provocation*, or thoſe tranſgreſſions wherewith they provoked him, *in the day of* their *temptation in the wilderneſs*, Heb. 3.6,7,8. And the *full aſſurance of hope*, as he again declares to them, is no otherwiſe to be upheld, but by *mens diligence in obeying, and in the work and labour of love*; which implies the whole of our obedience, *Heb.* 6.10,11. So that, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, they muſt *truſt in the Lord*, and, together with that *do good*, who are to receive mercy from him, *Pſal.* 37.3.

If men therefore will dare to ſin, and yet preſume; affront Gods Majeſty, and ſtill truſt in his Mercy: they muſt needs *deceive* their own Souls to their utter deſtruction. For it is a *vain confidence* and an *impudent preſumption* in any man, to *rely* upon *Gods goodneſs* for the pardon of his ſins, *without repenting* of them, and *obeying* him; whenas he has plainly told us, That his *goodneſs* it ſelf ſhall pity and pardon none but the *Penitent* and *Obedient*. He truſts to a falſe hope, and leans upon a broken Reed; for as long as his tranſgreſſions continue to ſeparate between him and his God, whatever God *CAN* do, yet certainly he *WILL* not

ſave him. *The Lords hand*, ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah* to the afflicted Jews, *is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity, your lips have ſpoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverſeneſs: none calls for Juſtice, nor any pleads for Truth*; and ſince your diſobedience is ſo heinous, your hopes muſt needs be falſe, *you TRUST in vanity*, Iſai. 59. 1,2,3,4. Chriſt himſelf never died to reconcile God to mens ſins, and to procure hopes of pardon for the finally impenitent and unperſwadably diſobedient. So that no man may ever think himſelf delivered to act wickedneſs; or wilfully tranſgreſs Gods Laws, and ſtill dare to truſt in him. But if any are ſo bold and frontleſs, Chriſt will rebuke them at the laſt Day, as God doth the preſumptuous Jews by the Prophet *Jeremiah*; *Behold*, ſays he, *you truſt in lying words which cannot profit* you. *Will you ſteal, murther, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, and* notwithſtanding all that, *come and ſtand before me in this houſe which is called by my Name*, as Men that own my ſervice, and dare truſt in my love, *and ſay*, as in effect you do by ſuch uſage, *we are delivered to do all theſe abominations?* Dare you by thus preſuming upon my favour in the midſt of all your tranſgreſſions, make me become a Patron and Protector of your villanies? *And is this houſe which is called by my Name, become a Den* or Receptacle and Sanctuary *of Robbers in your eyes? Behold I, even I have ſeen it, ſaith the Lood*; and that ſurely not to encourage and reward, but moſt ſeverely to puniſh it; for *I will* utterly *caſt you* out of *my ſight*, Jer. 7. 8, 9, 10, 11, 15. God will by no means endure to have his own moſt *holy Nature* become a *ſupport to ſin*, nor his *Religion* to be made a *refuge* for *diſobedience*, nor his

his *Mercy* and *Goodneſs* a *Sanctuary* to *wicked* and unholy *men*. So that no man muſt dare to hope and truſt in him, but he only who honeſtly obſerves his Laws and uprightly obeys him.

The *fear of God* then, and *truſt in his mercy* which the Goſpel encourages, and Chriſt our Judge will at the laſt Day accept of, is not a fear and truſt *without obedience*, but ſuch only as *implies* it. We muſt *ſerve him in fear*, and *obey him through hope*, as ever we expect he ſhould acquit and pardon us. For no fears or hopes will avail us unto bliſs, but thoſe that amend our lives, and effect in us an honeſt ſervice and obedience.

CHAP. VII.

Of Pardon promiſed to the love of God, and of our Neighbour.

The CONTENTS.

Of Pardon promiſed to the love of God, and of our Neighbour. Of the fitneſs of an univerſal love to produce an univerſal obedience. That pardon is promiſed to it for this Reaſon. The Concluſion.

EIghtly, That condition which the Goſpel indiſpenſably requires of us to our pardon and happineſs, is ſometimes called *Love*. For of this S. *Paul* ſays plainly, that it is the *fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. It is the great condition of Life, the ſtanding Terms of mercy and happineſs. We have the ſame Apoſtles word

word for it of our *love of God. Thoſe things which neither eye hath ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man to conceive, are prepared for them who LOVE God,* 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. And again, *Chap.* 8. *If any man love God, the ſame is* known or *accepted of him,* verſ. 3. And S. *John* ſays as much of the *love of our Neighbour. Beloved, let us LOVE one another, for LOVE is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God,* 1 *John* 4. 7. And again, *God is Love, and manifeſted his Love in giving Chriſt to die for us. And if we love one another, God dwells in us. For hereby,* by this mark and evidence, *we know that we dwell in him, and he in us; becauſe he hath given us of* this loving temper and *Spirit of his,* ver. 8, 9, 12, 13. And to the ſame purpoſe he ſpeaks fully in the third Chapter of that firſt Epiſtle, *We know,* ſays he, *that we have paſſed from death unto life; becauſe we LOVE the BRETHREN,* v. 14.

Now our hearty *love both of God and men,* is a moſt natural and eaſie Principle of an intire ſervice and obedience. For the moſt genuine and proper effect of Love, is to ſeek the ſatisfaction and delight of the perſons beloved. It is careful in nothing to behave it ſelf unſeemly, but to keep back from every thing that may offend, and forward in all ſuch ſervices as may any ways pleaſure and content them, If they *rejoice,* it *congratulates;* if they *mourn,* it *grieves* with them. If they are in *diſtreſs,* it affords *ſuccour;* if in *want, ſupply;* in *doubts,* it miniſters *counſel;* in *buſineſs diſpatch.* It is always full and teeming with good offices, and tranſforms it ſelf into all ſhapes whereby it may procure their ſatisfaction, and render their condition comfortable and eaſie to them. So that it exerts it ſelf *in pity to the miſerable, in protection to the oppreſſed, in relief to the indigent, in counſel to the ignorant, in encouragement*

to

to the good, in kind reproof to the evil, in thanks for kindneſſes, in patience and forbearance upon ſufferings, in forgiveneſs of wrong and injuries: In one word it is an univerſal Source and Spring of all works of *Juſtice, Charity, Humility and Peace.* Now the Body of our Religion is made up of theſe Duties. For *what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, O man,* ſaith the Prophet *Micah, but to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God,* Mic. 6. 8. Thoſe things which God has adopted into his Service, and made the matter of our duty towards one another, are nothing elſe but theſe natural effects of love and kindneſs, and expreſſions of good nature towards all men. All the Precepts of Religion only forbid our doing evil, and require our doing good to all the World. And ſince, as the Apoſtle argues, love ſeeketh all things that are good, and *worketh no evil to our Neighbour; therefore Love* muſt needs be *the fulfilling of thoſe Laws* which concern them. *This Commandment,* for inſtance, as he illuſtrates it, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery; thou ſhalt not kill; thou ſhalt not ſteal; thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs; thou ſhalt not covet:* all theſe, *and if there be any other Commandment* relating to our Brethren, *it is briefly comprehended in this* Saying, *Thou ſhalt LOVE thy NEIGHBOUR as thy ſelf.* For *LOVE worketh none* of all theſe *ills to our Neighbour, therefore LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law,* Rom. 13. 9, 10.

Thus doth our *Love of our Neighbour* fulfil all thoſe particular Laws which contain our Duty towards *them:* and in like manner our *Love of God* fulfils all thoſe other Precepts, which comprehend our Duty towards *him.* For all that he requires of us towards himſelf, is neither more nor leſs than to *honour and worſhip him;* to do nothing in all our behaviour, that ſavours of diſreſpect towards him; nor by any thought, word or action,

on, to diſgrace or contemn him. But now nothing renders any perſon ſo ſecure from contempt, as our love and affection for him. Affront and reproach are a great part of enmity and deſpite, and ſo can never proceed from us towards thoſe whom we love and value. But this is always certain, that if we are kindly affected towards any perſon, we ſhall not fail to expreſs a due honour of him, and bear him a juſt reſpect and veneration. So that if we do indeed love God, he is ſecure from all affront; and diſobedience being a moſt conſummate reproach, ſince our Love will not permit us to diſhonour, it can never ſuffer us to diſobey him.

Thus mighty and powerful, eaſie and natural a Principle of an univerſal obedience, both towards God and men, is an univerſal Love: it doth the work without difficulty, and carries us on to obey with eaſe; in as much as all the particular Precepts and Inſtances of obedience, are but ſo many genuine effects, and proper expreſſions of it. The effects of our love are the parts of our obedience; the products of our Duty and Religion, as well as of our paſſion. So that it is a moſt natural Spring of our obedient ſervice, becauſe it prompts us to the very ſame things, to which God has bound and obliged us by his Precepts.

But beſides this way of an univerſal love's influencing an univerſal obedience, through this coincidence of the effects of Love, and the inſtances of Duty; our Love of God, who is our *King* and *Governour*, were a ſure principle of our obedience to him, were his Precepts inſtanced, not in the ſame things which are the effects of a general Love, which is the true Caſe; but in things different from them. For although our love would not prompt us to perform them by its natural tendency towards them, and for their own ſakes: yet it would through ſubmiſſion and duty, and for his ſake who enjoyn'd

joyn'd them. It would make us deny our ſelves to pleaſure him; and produce other effects than our own temper enclines us to, to do him ſervice. For as Love is for doing hurt to none; ſo leaſt of all to Governours: it will give to every one their own, but to them moſt eſpecially. Now Duty and Service is that which we owe to our Rulers; and the proper way of Love's exerting it ſelf in that, is by obedience. If we love, we ſhall be induſtrious to pleaſe; and the only way of pleaſing them, is by doing what they command us. For there is no ſuch offence to a Governour, as the tranſgreſſion of his Laws; no injury like that of oppoſing his Will, and deſpiſing his Authority. To do this is to renounce all ſubjection, and to caſt off his Yoke; and ſo is not to expreſs love, but to declare enmity; not affectionately to own, but in open malice to defie him. But if any man would contribute to his delight, there is no way for that, but by a performance of his pleaſure: it is nothing but our obedience that can add to his contentment, or evidence our Love. For diſobedience to our Governours is clearly the moſt profeſt hatred, as the obſervance of our Duty is the moſt allowed inſtance of friendſhip and good will.

So that Love is a Spring and Principle of our Obedience, not only becauſe the Commandment and it run parallel, and the inſtances of Gods Laws are the ſame with the effects of a general Love; but alſo becauſe our love of God would make us obey him, even in ſuch inſtances of Duty as differ from them. For all that averſion which we have to the thing commanded, would be outweighed by our deſire to pleaſe him who commands it: and although we ſhould neglect it upon its own; yet for his ſake we ſhould certainly fulfill and perform it.

And becauſe our Love of *God* and *men* is ſo natural a Spring, and ſo ſweet and eaſie a Principle to produce

in us a perfect and intire obedience to all *thoſe* Laws which concern *either*, or to any *other*: therefore has God promiſed ſo nobly to reward it. He never intends to crown an idle and unworking love; but ſuch only as is active and induſtrious. For when he ſayes that he who *loves God and men is known of God, and accepted by him, and born of him; and that God dwells in him, and has prepared Heaven for him*: he ſpeaks *metonymically*, and means all the while a love with theſe religious effects, a love that is productive of an entire ſervice and obedience.

And to this Point the Scriptures ſpeak fully. For as for our love of God himſelf, and of our Saviour Chriſt; that is plainly of no account in his judgement, but when it makes us keep his Commands, and become induſtriouſly obedient. *If ye LOVE me*, ſaith Chriſt, *keep my Commandments; for he that hath my Commandments, and KEEPETH them, he it is that loveth me; and he* only *who* ſo *loveth me*, in obeying me, *ſhall be beloved of my Father, and I will love him*, John 14. 15, 21. *Whoſo keepeth Gods Word*, ſaith S. *John, in him verily is the love of God made perfect*: *and hereby* it is, by this perfection of Love in Obedience, that *we know we are in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 5. But if we have only a pretended *verbal love*, or an *inward paſſion* for God, and ſhew no *Signs* or *Effects* of it in our *obedient works* and *actions*: we ſhall be as far from being accepted by him, as we are from any true and real ſervice of him. He will look upon all our Profeſſions as vain ſpeech, and downright flattery: but will not eſteem it as having any thing of ſober truth and reality. For *whoſoever hath this Worlds goods, and ſeeth his Brother hath need, and* obeys not Gods Command of ſhewing mercy (and the Caſe is the ſame in other Inſtances) but *ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him; how dwells the love of God in him?* 1 Joh. 3. 17.

And

And then as for our *love of our Brethren*; it doth not at all avail us unto Mercy and Life, unleſs it make us perform all thoſe things which are required of us, by the Laws of *Juſtice*, *Charity* and *Beneficence* towards them. *My little Children*, ſaith S. *John*, *let us not love* only *in word*, *and in tongue*; *but in deed* alſo *and in truth*. For it is *hereby*, by this operative love, that *we know we are of the truth*, *and ſhall aſſure our hearts* in full confidence of his mercy *before him*, 1 Joh. 3. 18, 19. Our *love to them* is to be manifeſted as *Chriſt's* was to us, *viz.* in *good effects* and a *real ſervice*; yea, when occaſion requires it, and their eternal weal may be very much promoted, and their Faith confirmed by it, in giving up our ſelves to *Martyrdom*, and laying down our own lives for their advantage. *Hereby*, ſayes this ſame Apoſtle, *perceive we the love of God*, *becauſe he laid down his life for us*. And if we would be reputed to have that love, which, as we are told at the fourteenth Verſe, wafts us over *from Death unto Life*; *we ought*, upon a fit occaſion, not to flinch from the moſt coſtly ſervice, but even *to lay down our* very * *lives for the Brethren*, 1 *John* 3. 16. It is only this obedient and operative love of men, which will be owned by Chriſt our Judge, and confer a juſt claim to Life and Pardon at the laſt Day. Our Love will not be rewarded as a thing that is *abſolute* in it ſelf, but only as an *Inſtrument*; in as much as *it makes us*, as S. *Paul* ſayes, *to fulfil the whole Law*, which makes any thing an inſtance of Duty towards them, *Rom.* 13. 8. But if we only profeſs love to them in *kind words* and *tender expreſſions*, but ſhew none in our *works* and *actions*; this idle, uſeleſs love will be of no account to *us*, nor benefit us more

* St. *Clemens Ro.* tells us of theſe heights of Charity, which were practiſed in his Time, ἐπισάμεθα πολλὰς ἐν ἡμῖν παραδεδωκόλας ἑαυτὰς εἰς δεσμὰς, ὅπως ἕτερους λυτρώσωνται, πολλοὶ ἑαυτὰς παρέδωκαν εἰς δουλείαν, καὶ λαβόντες τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν, ἕτερες ἐλύτρωσαν. 1 *Ep. ad Cor. c.* 55. And the *Parabolani*, or men who hazarded their own lives to redeem the lives of others, were very numerous among the Chriſtians in the firſt times. Which Office S. *Paul* tells us *Priſcilla* and *Aquila*, and *Epaphroditus* had done for him, *Rom.* 16. 3, 4. *Phil.* 2. 30. This practice is a moſt excellent Comment upon this Text.

than it profits *them*. *For if a Brother, or a Siſter*, ſayes S. *James*, *be naked and deſtitute of daily food; and one of you* gives them only ſome good words, and *ſayes unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warm'd* with Clothes, *and filled* with Food; but *notwithſtanding* all this affectionate language, *ye give them not* in the mean while *thoſe things which are needful for the Body; what doth it profit?* Nothing at all ſurely, nor will it ever advantage your ſelves as an inſtance of that *mercy which rejoyceth againſt judgement*, ver. 13. more than it profits them, *James* 2. 15, 16.

So that when Chriſt comes to Judgement at the laſt Day, we ſee plainly that no love either of *God* or *men* will avail us, but only that which has kept the Commandments; we ſhall never be acquitted at that Bar upon a pretence of love without obedience: for all that can poſſibly ſtand us in any ſtead there, is a *loving ſervice*, a love which has made us careful and diligent to obey.

And thus at laſt we have fully ſeen, that as for all thoſe other things beſides obedience, whereunto the Goſpel promiſes pardon and happineſs; they are by no means available to our bliſs when they are ſeparate from obedience, but then only when they effect and imply it. They all aim at it, and end in it, and are of no account in Gods Judgment further than they produce it. It is not either *our knowing Chriſt, or our believing Chriſt, or our being in Chriſt, or our truſting in Chriſt, or our loving Chriſt, or our fears of God, or our confeſſions of ſins, or our pouring out many prayers*; or any thing elſe that will ſave us whilſt we diſobey. No, at the laſt Day we ſhall certainly be damned notwithſtanding them, if the obedience of our works is wanting. It is only a *working ſervice* that will pleaſe our Judge, and which can poſſibly ſecure us: if we are able in that Court to produce that, it will clear us, but without it nothing elſe will.

Chriſts

Chriſts Goſpel, whereby all of us muſt ſtand or fall at that Day, has fully declared this already; and Chriſt himſelf will then confirm it. So that 'tis in vain to caſt about for other *marks*, and to ſeek after other *Evidences* of our title to bliſs and happineſs; nothing leſs than our Repentance and Obedience will avail us unto life, and through the *merits* of Chriſt, and the *Grace of his Goſpel*, it ſhall.

And now at laſt we ſee clearly what that Condition is which the Goſpel indiſpenſably requires of us, and which is to mete out to us our laſt doom of bliſs or miſery; that in the *general* it is nothing elſe, neither more nor leſs, than our *obedience*.

BOOK

BOOK II.

Of the Laws of the Gospel, which are the Rule of this Obedience, in particular.

CHAP. I.

Of the particular Laws comprehended under the Duty of Sobriety.

The Contents.

A Division of our Duty into three general Vertues, Piety, Sobriety, Righteousness. Of the nature of Sobriety. The particular Laws commanding and prohibiting under this first Member. A larger explication of the nature of Mortification.

BUT in regard our *working* and *obeying* is that whereupon all our *hopes* and *happiness*, our *security* and *comfort* hangs; it is very necessary that after all which has been hitherto discoursed of it in the *general*, we go on still further, and enquire of it more *particularly*. For if it be our *Obedience* or *Disobedience* that must dispense *Life* or *Death* to us, and eternally *save* or *destroy* us at the last Day; then whosoever would know before hand what shall be his *final*

nal Sentence, muſt enquire what is his *preſent ſtate*, and what have been his *paſt actions*, whether in them he have *obeyed* or *no*. And the way to underſtand that, is *firſt* to know what thoſe *Laws* are whereto his *obedience* is due, and in what *manner* and *degrees* he is to *obey* them: and when once he has informed himſelf in theſe, he may quickly learn from the *Teſtimony* of his own heart and *Conſcience*, whether he has *performed* that *Obedience*, which is indiſpenſably required to his happineſs, or has *fallen ſhort* of it.

And to give the beſt aſſiſtance that I can in ſo weighty a Caſe, I will here proceed to enquire further into this *Obedience*, and ſhew concerning it theſe *two* things;

I. *What thoſe Laws are, which under the Sanctions of Life or Death the Goſpel binds us to obey*; And,

II. *What degrees and manner of obedience, is indiſpenſably required to them.*

I. Then I will enquire, *what thoſe Laws are, whereby at the laſt Day we muſt all be judged, and which under the Sanction of Life or Death the Goſpel binds us to obey.*

And that I may render this enquiry as uſeful as I can, I will ſet down, as I go along, the *meaning* and *explication* of thoſe *ſeveral Vertues* and *Vices*, which are either *required* or *forbidden* in the *particular Laws*, that ſo we may more truly and readily underſtand whether the Vertues have been performed, or the Vices incurred; and whether thereby the Laws have been broken or kept by us.

As for the *Laws* and *Commands of God*, they are all reduced by S. *Paul* to three Heads. For either they require ſomething from us *towards God himſelf*, and ſo are contained in *works of piety*; or *towards our Neighbours*, all which are comprehended in *works of righteouſneſs*; or towards our *own ſelves*, as all thoſe Precepts do which are taken up in *works of ſobriety*. In

theſe

theſe three general Vertues is comprized the *Sum* of our *Chriſtian Duty*, even all that is required by the *Goſpel* as the *Condition of Salvation*. For *the* Goſpel, ſaith he, or that *Grace of God which brings us* the welcome offers of *Salvation, hath appeared* now *to all men, teaching us*, as ever we expect that ſalvation which it tenders to us, *that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould* LIVE SOBERLY, GODLY, *and* RIGHTEOUSLY *in this preſent world*, Tit. 2. 11, 12.

I begin with that which contains all our Duty towards our ſelves, *viz. Sobriety*.

Sobriety is in the general, *Such a regulation of all our actions*, whether they concern our Bodies or our Souls, *as makes it appear that they are guided by a* b *ſound mind preſiding in Fleſh, and that the animal Body which they flow from, is under the Command of a ſpiritual Reaſon*. It is a doing what is becoming and fit for ſuch Creatures as are Soul as well as Body, that have a wiſe and diſcerning Spirit which ſhould govern and give Laws in this lump of Fleſh. So that Sobriety is a taking care, and giving what is *due* and *becoming* to both the Parts of our Natures, *viz.* our *Bodies* and our *Souls*.

b So Σωφροσύνη, the Greek name for ſobriety, is fetched by the Greek Lexicons from Σῶς and φρὴν, from its preſerving and evidencing a *ſound* Mind or Reaſon.

As for our *Bodies*, all the things in the world which affect them are of a *limited goodneſs* or *illneſs*; but yet, in their *deſires* and *averſations of them*, they do not of themſelves know any Limits: So that in *their deſires and actions*, that *dueneſs* and *decency* which Sobriety preſcribes, is *keeping within due bounds* or *moderation*.

And this Moderation is either,

1. Of their *deſires and uſe* of ſuch things as *gratifie* and *delight* them; whether that *inveigling delight*, which cauſes ſuch *exceſs* of *uſe and deſire*, be

1. In

1. In *Meats*, and our deſire and uſe of them, both as to their *quantity* and *quality*, is moderated by *Temperance.*
2. In *Drinks*, and the like moderation there is by *Sobriety*, more particularly ſo called.
3. In other *bodily pleaſures* which are particularly called *Luſt*, and our bodily deſires and uſe of them are moderated by *Chaſtity*. And the abi lity to contain our ſelves, and to reſtrain the violence of our deſires herein, is called *Continence.*
4. In *Rich s and Honours*, and the deſire and uſe of theſe are moderated by *contempt of the world*, and *contentedneſs.*

ἐγκράτεια, is that whereby a man κατέχειν ὀυ ναται τὸν λογισμῶ πλὼ ὁπ-θυμίαν ὁρμῶσαν ἐπὶ φαύλας ἡδονάς. Andron. Rh. lib. περὶ παθῶν.

In our bodily deſires, and uſe of all theſe things, by reaſon of the unbridled temper of our bodily Appetites, which ſtop at no bounds, nor ever know when they have enough, we are in great danger to *exceed:* and therefore our deſires and uſe of them ſtand in need to be *moderated* and retrenched by theſe Vertues, that it may appear we underſtand and act, not as *brute Beaſts*, who have nothing elſe but *bodily appetite* to guide them; but as *men*, who have wiſe Souls preſiding in Fleſh, to keep within *decency* and *due bounds* the exorbitant inclinations of our Bodies. Which Souls moreover, as we ſhew by ſuch actions, are of an *immortal* and *invaluable* nature, whoſe *intereſt* therefore is *infinitely dearer* to us, and calls *incomparably more for our care* and pains, than our *Bodies* either *do*, or in *reaſon ought to call* for.

2. Of their averſation and avoidance of ſuch things as grieve and trouble them. Whether that matter of our bodily avoidance be
   1. The *troubles* and *loſſes* that are laid in the *way of our Duty*; and our avoidance of theſe is moderated

rated by the Duty of *taking up the Croſs.*
2. The *irkſome pains* which we take in *going through it*, and performing it; and our avoidance of this is moderated by the Vertues of *diligence* and *watchfulneſs.*
3. The *great evils* which we have already *fallen* under, and are ſuffering for it; and our avoidance and flight of theſe is moderated and reſtrained by *patience.*

Our *hatred* and *avoidance* of all theſe evils, which in themſelves are naturally prone to be exceſſive, are ſo to be moderated and over-ruled by theſe Vertues, that all the world may ſee we are not acted as the *brute Beaſt*, by *meer ſenſe* and *appetite*, which know no Rules of *decency*, nor ſtop at any *limits*; but *know* and *do* as *becomes men*, who are endowed with *ſpiritual* and *diſcerning Souls*, which underſtand how to give *Laws*, and preſcribe *Rules of decency* to our fleſhly Appetites, and whoſe *ſins* are far *worſe evils* than any, or all the ſufferings which can befal our Bodies: So that to *keep back from them*, we will not *avoid* and *fly from theſe*, but willingly *embrace* and *undergo them.*

And to *enable* us the better thus to *moderate* all the deſires and averſations, and to *keep perfectly under Command*, and within juſt bounds theſe *naturally extravagant* tendencies and propenſions of our Fleſh: we muſt curb and keep it in, and *dead in great degrees*, not only its *immoderate* and *exceſſive*, but alſo its *innocent* eagerneſs and *inclinations*, leſt they become a Snare to us, and acquire ſo much ſtrength by our indulgence of them, as will carry us on to gratifie them at other times when they are not innocent, but ſinful; which, but for ſuch *curbing* and *conqueſt* of them, they would be ſure to do. And this is done by the *general* Vertues of *mortification* and *ſelf-denyal.* The

The great matter indeed, and principal Object of *mortification* and *ſelf-denyal*, is our *ſinful appetites*, and ſuch *diſobedient actions* as we are tempted and drawn into by the *untamed inclinations* of our Bodies. And this S. *Paul* affirms, is an indiſpenſable Duty, and a Vertue of *abſolute neceſſity* unto life. *If ye live after the Fleſh*, ſaith he, *you ſhall dye; but if you through the Spirit do mortifie the DEEDS of the Body, you ſhall live*, Rom. 8 13.

But as our *ſinful* and *diſobedient appetites* are the prime Object of all religious *ſelf-denyal* and *mortification*, and that which is *abſolutely neceſſary*, as the *end*: ſo likewiſe are our *innocent appetites* an inferiour object of it, and our *mortification of them* is a neceſſary *means* and *inſtrument*, without which we ſhall never be able to *mortifie the other*. For a *free allowance* of our bodily deſires in all things *lawful*, and an *unlimited gratification* of them in all inſtances whatſoever where they are *innocent*; would certainly prove a *Snare* to us, and betray us into a like indulgence and ſatisfaction of them in ſome Caſes where they are *ſinful* and *diſobedient*. And the reaſon of this is plain, becauſe if we ſhould *gratifie* them in all things where we may *lawfully*, and never deny them any thing but what is *ſinful*; they muſt needs come by long uſe and indulgence to *rule* in us, and to have a great Power and Empire over us. We ſhall find it a matter of great *difficulty* to put them by, and a very *painful task* to *deny* them any thing; ſo that whitherſoever they *lead* us, it is odds but we ſhall follow them. But now as for their Parts, they make no difference between an *innocent* and a *ſinful* enjoyment: they do not diſtinguiſh things into *good* and *evil*, they are not moved by *Law* and *decency*, but *pleaſure*; and deſire what is *delightſome* and *agrees with them*, whether it happen to be *allow'd* to them, or *forbidden*. If by a

cuſtomary gratification therefore, and *indulgence* of them in any thing, even in inſtances that are *innocent* and *lawful*, we ſuffer our bodily appetites to grow *ſtrong* in us, and to get the *guidance* and *management* of us; they will over-rule us in inſtances that are *prohibited*, as well as in thoſe that are *allowed*; and make us fulfil them in things *ſinful*, as well as in things *innocent*. So that if we would be ſure to conquer and ſubdue them in all ſuch *inſtances* as are *ſinful*, we muſt take care that they grow not ſtrong upon us in any *inſtances whatſoever*; but *infeeble* them, and keep them low, and make them tame and governable, ready to come or go at our own pleaſure. And this now is a piece of Command and Maſtery, which is never to be hoped for in *gratifying* and *indulging* them in *any* ſort of inſtances, but only by *mortifying* and *denying* them in *all*. For this power of *denying* them at our own *pleaſure*, cannot otherwiſe be attained, but by a *long uſe* and *cuſtom* of *denyals*: we muſt learn to *deny* and *mortifie* them in particular Inſtances, before we can in any reaſon hope to deny them for altogether.

And this *mortification* and *denyal* of our *lawful* and *innocent* bodily appetites, being thus plainly neceſſary to the *denyal* and *mortification* of our *ſinful* and *unlawful bodily deſires and actions*; our Lord Chriſt, who beſt underſtood the neceſſities of our natures, what inſtruments were moſt neceſſary, and what means moſt proportionate for us, has enacted it into a Law. So that now 'tis every mans duty to *mortifie* and *deny*, not only all *ſinful bodily actions and deſires*; but, ſo far as is neceſſary unto that, all ſuch as are innocent and lawful alſo. And according to the different degrees of mens progreſs herein, are their different perfections in Vertue, and their different meaſures of ſecurity and aſſurance that they ſhall continue in it. It being only the

unmortifiedneſs

unmortifiedneſs of their fleſhly deſires which can prove a Snare to them, and a dangerous temptation; *Every man*, as S. *James* ſayes, being *tempted then, when he is drawn away of his own Luſts, and enticed*, Jam. 1. 14.

And all the forenamed Vertues, *viz. Temperance, Sobriety, Chaſtity, &c.* are Duties incumbent upon us, and implied in that care which this general Vertue *Sobriety* takes of our meaner Part, our *Bodies*.

And then as for what more directly concerns our Souls, that *dueneſs* and *decency* which *Sobriety* preſcribes in their actions, and towards them, is either,

1. In *thinking no better* of our ſelves than we *deſerve*, but having a *juſt* ſenſe of all our *weakneſſes* and *defects*; which is *humility* and *lowlineſs* of mind.
2. In *taking* all that *juſt care* and thoughtfulneſs after their *future good* and happineſs, which their *worth* requires; which is *heavenly-mindedneſs*, or contriving and deſigning for the things of Heaven.

So that thoſe particular Laws of God, which command ſomething to be done by us towards our *own ſelves*, both as to our *Bodies*, and our *Souls*, and which are all comprized under the *general* Name, *Sobriety*; are theſe,

The Law of *humility*, of *heavenly-mindedneſs*, of *temperance*, of *ſobriety*, of *chaſtity*, of *continence*, of *contempt of the world, and contentment with our preſent condition*, of *courage* and *taking up the Croſs*, of *diligence* and *watchfulneſs*, of *patience*, of *mortification* and *ſelf-denyal*.

And as he has commanded us to exerciſe all theſe *Vertues* towards our *own ſelves*; ſo has he as ſtrictly forbid us to act thoſe *Vices* which are contrary to them: as are theſe that follow.

Firſt, To *humility*, or lowlineſs of mind, is oppoſed,

1. An

1. An *over-high* conceit of our own *excellence* and *preheminence* above others, making us *set our selves* and *strive to appear above them*, and *d contemn* and *despise them* as persons that are *below us*: which is *pride*.
2. An outward expression of this, in making a *false* shew of more excellence than indeed we have, whether in *religious*, *natural*, or *civil* endowments, which implies *e hypocrisie* joyn'd with *pride*; and is called *arrogance*, *ostentation*, *boasting*.

d ὑπερηφανία ἐς καθαφ' ὑπόσις τις πλὴν αὐτῷ ἧς ἀλλων, Theoph. Char. Ethic. c. 25.

e ἀλαζονεία and εἰρωνεία are reckoned by *Arist.* as the extremities of veracity, and species of a lye. ἀλαζὼν he sayes is one, who is προσποιητὴς ἧς ἐ δοξων ὢν μὴ ὑπαρχόντων ἢ μειζόνων ἢ ὑπάρχει, Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 2. c. 7. & l. 4. c. 7. *Theophrastus* defines it to be a raising a greater opinion of us than we really deserve. προσδοκία τινῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐς ὄντων, Char. Ethic. c. 24. And Hesych. explains ἀλαζὼν by ψευσὴς, ἢ ἐπὶ ἄλλη, *i. e.* πλάνης ζῶν.

3. An industrious affecting in all things, by setting out our own praise, and exposing our atchievements, to get the honour and praise of others answerable to the conceit which we have of our own selves; which is *vain-glory*.
4. A restless pursuit of *honour* and *great Places*, which we conceit our selves to be worthy of, which is *Ambition*.

And the effects of this *pride* and *elation* of mind are,

1. In our *behaviour*, a *scornful* and *contemptuous* disrespect & sleight of others; which is *haughtiness*. And if it go on to an *unusual* and enormous degree, it is *insolence*. And this *haughtiness* when it is expressed in a *commanding* way, as if we had *Lordship* and *Authority* over them, is *imperiousness*. Which, when 'tis shewn in exacting their submission to our *dogms* or *opinions*, is *dogmaticalness*, or *impatience of contradiction*.
2. In our *Speeches* of others, an *envious depression* and disparagement of them, the better to set off our own selves, which is *backbiting*.

3. In

3. In our *converſation* a mixture of *pride* and *envy*, or an *f envious provoking ſtrife* of *out-doing* others and being better thought of our ſelves, or of *hindering* their deſigns, leſt they ſhould enjoy what we, who in our own opinion deſerve it better, are deprived of; which is *emulation*.

f ζηλοῖ, φθονεῖ, ἐρίζει, μιμεῖται. Heſych.

Secondly, To *heavenly-mindedneſs*, is oppoſed an *over-induſtrious care* of preſent things; or being *wholly*, or *chiefly* taken up with this World; which is *worldlineſs*.

Thirdly, To *moderation* is oppoſed *luxury* or *exceſs*. And as that moderation which ſobriety preſcribed, was either in *meats*, or *drinks*, *&c.* ſo is this breach of *ſobriety* in *exceſs* likewiſe. For,

Firſt, To *temperance* is oppoſed *intemperance*, which when it is a Luxury,

1. In the *quantity* of Meat, is called *Gluttony*.
2. In the *deliciouſneſs* or *quality* of it, it is called *Voluptuouſneſs*.

Secondly, To *ſobriety*, or a moderate and undiſturbing uſe of Drink, is oppoſed a ſtupefying and intoxicating uſe of it, which is *Drunkenneſs*. And this when it is accompanied with *g boiſterouſneſs*, *unchaſte Songs*, and *riotous mirth*; is called *revelling*.

g κῶμοι, ἀσελγῆ ἀσματα ποτικὰ· κωμασῖς, τρυφῶν μετ' ἀυδῆς, Heſych.

Thirdly, To *Chaſtity* is oppoſed *unchaſteneſs*; and that weakneſs which betrayes us into it, *viz.* our *ſubjection* to our bodily Luſts, and inability to contain them within due bounds, is called *incontinence*: Which iſſues out and expreſſes it ſelf,

1. In preparatory enticements, by an *indulgence* to *provoking geſtures*, *touches*, *words*, or *actions*; which is called *laſciviouſneſs* or *wantonneſs*. The particular expreſſion whereof in obſcene and *h* ſhameful words,

h αἰσχρὰ τὰ αἰσχύνλω ἐιρεῖν δυνάμενα, Heſych.

is

is *filthiness*. And if they be uttered in picquancy of wit, and smartness of conceit, it is *foolish* or *i obscene* Jesting.

i εὐτραπελία, αἰσχρολογία, μωρολογία, Hesych.

2. In the acting or execution of it; which may be done,
   1. By one person, upon their own Body alone; and then 'tis *impurity* or *uncleanness*.
   2. By two persons, each with other. Which if they are both men, is called *Sodomy*; and by S. *Paul*, Rom. 1. 27. *Men with men working that which is unseemly*; and the persons who are guilty of it are cal'd the *abominable*, Rev. 21. 8. And the persons suffering themselves to be so abused, are called the *effeminate*, 1 Cor. 6. 9.

But if they be Man and Woman, then either,
   1. One, or both are married to another; and so 'tis *Adultery*.
   2. Both are unmarried, and so it is *Fornication*. Which if it be,
      1. By the *joint-consent* of both, is *Whoredom*, or *bare Fornication*; and this, when the Parties are too nearly allied, is called *Incest*.
      2. By forcing of one; and then 'tis *Rape* or ravishing. Which Vice S. *Paul* expresses by that *k* word which we translate *Extortioners*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. and *Chap.* 6. 10.

k ἅρπαγες.

Fourthly, To *contempt* of the world and *contentment* with our present condition, is opposed *covetousness*, which is an immoderate love of the world, or an unsatisfiedness with what we have, and an *l* insatiable desire of more; and *grudging* or *repining*.

l πλεονεξία.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, To *takeing up the Croſs* is oppoſed our being *ſcandalized*, or turn'd out of the way of Duty and Obedience, by reaſon of it; or a *politick* and *ſelfiſh deſerting* of our *Duty* to *avoid* it.

Sixthly, To *diligence* and *watchfulneſs* in doing of our Duty, is oppoſed a heedleſneſs of it, and remiſs application to it; which is *careleſneſs* and *idleneſs*.

Seventhly, To *patience* in ſuffering for it, is oppoſed an immoderate dread of pain, and diſhoneſt avoidance of it; which is *ſoftneſs* and *fearfulneſs*.

Eighthly, To *mortification* and *ſelf denial*, is oppoſed *ſelf-love* and *ſelf pleaſing*; which as it is an induſtrious care to pleaſe and gratifie our bodily *ſenſes*, is called *ſenſuality*; and as it is a ready and conſtant ſerving and obeying the luſts and deſires of the Fleſh; eſpecially, when they carry us againſt the Commands of God, is called *carnality*.

Theſe are thoſe *Vices* and breaches of Duty towards *our ſelves*, which Gods Laws have *prohibited* under the pains of Death and Hell: as the other were ſuch *Vertues* as under the ſame penalty he *exacts* of us.

So that in the *general* Law of *Sobriety* we ſee are contain'd all theſe following, whether *commanding*, or *forbidding* Laws.

The *commanding* Law of *humility*, of *heavenly-mindedneſs*, of *temperance*, of *ſobriety*, of *charity*, of *continence*, of *contempt* of the World and *contentment*, of *courage* and *taking up the Croſs*, of *diligence* and *watchfulneſs*, of *patience*, of *mortification* and *ſelf-denial*.

And oppoſite to theſe the *forbidding* Law againſt *pride*, againſt *arrogance* or *oſtentation*, againſt *vain glory*, againſt *ambition*, againſt *haughtineſs*, againſt *inſolence*, againſt *imperiouſneſs*, againſt *dogmaticalneſs*, againſt *envious backbiting*, againſt *emulation*, againſt *worldlineſs*, againſt *intemperance*, againſt *gluttony*, againſt *voluptuouſneſs*,

neſs, againſt *drunkenneſs*, againſt *revelling*, againſt *incontinence*, againſt *laſciviouſneſs* or *wantonneſs*, againſt *filthineſs*, againſt *obſcene Jeſtings*, againſt *impurity* or *uncleanneſs*, againſt *Sodomy*, againſt *effeminateneſs*, againſt *adultery*, againſt *fornication*, againſt *whoredom*, againſt *inceſt*, againſt *rape*, againſt *covetouſneſs*, againſt *grudging* and *repining*, againſt *refuſing* or being *ſcandaled at the Croſs*, againſt *idleneſs* and *careleſneſs*, againſt *fearfulneſs* and *ſoftneſs*, againſt *ſelf-love*, againſt *carnality*, againſt *ſenſuality*.

CHAP. II.

Of LOVE the Epitome of Duty towards God and Men, and of the particular Laws comprehended under Piety towards God.

The Contents.

Of the Duties of Piety and Righteouſneſs, both comprehended in one general Duty, LOVE. It the Epitome of our Duty. The great happineſs of a good nature. The kind temper of the Chriſtian Religion. Of the effects of LOVE. The great Duty to God is Honour. The outward expreſſion whereof is worſhip. The great offence is diſhonour. Of the ſeveral Duties and tranſgreſſions contained under both.

FOR the *two* remaining Members in S. *Paul*'s Diviſion, *viz. Godlineſs* or *Piety*, and *Righteouſneſs*, which require ſomething from us to *God* or to our *Neigh-*

Neighbour; they may yet be reduced into a narrower compaſs, and are both comprized in that one word *LOVE*. For all that ever God requires of us, either to *himſelf* or towards *other men*, is only *heartily* and *effectually* to *LOVE* them. And this *abridgment* of our whole Duty, in reſpect of theſe *two* remaining parts of it towards *God* and *man*, into that *one* compendious Law of *LOVE*, is no more than what our Saviour *Chriſt* and his Apoſtle *Paul* have already made to our hands. For hear how they ſpeak of it: *Jeſus ſaith unto the Lawyer, Thou ſhalt LOVE the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy ſoul, and all thy mind. This is the firſt and great Commandment: and the ſecond is like unto it, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf. On theſe two*, which in the thing commanded, *LOVE*, are but one, *hang all the Law* (of the ten Commandments, *viz.* which meddle not with our Duty towards our ſelves, but only towards God and our Neighbour) *and the Prophets*, Matth. 22. 37, 38, 39, 40. And S. *Paul* ſpeaks home to the ſame purpoſe: *By love*, ſays he, *ſerve one another; for all the LAW is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou ſhalt LOVE thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, Gal. 5. 13, 14. And ſpeaking again of the Laws concerning our Neighbour, he tells us that *LOVE worketh no ill to his Neighbour*, and *therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10.

Thus *rare* and *heavenly* a *Religion* is that of our Saviour Chriſt: a *Religion* that is not content to have only *great* and *eminent meaſures of goodneſs* in it, but is *perfectly made up* of *LOVE* and *good Nature*. All that it requires from us is only to be *kind-hearted*, and full of good Offices both towards *God* and *men*. Every man of a *loving good nature* is enclined by his *temper* to do all that is demanded by *Gods Law*; ſo that he has nothing remaining to turn his *temper* into *obedience*, but

to *direct* his *intention*, and to exert all the effects of love for the ſake of Gods Command, which he is otherwiſe ſtrongly excited to by the natural propenſions of his own mind His paſſion and his God require the ſame ſervice, and that which is only a natural fruit of the firſt, may become, if he ſo deſign it, a piece of Religion and Obedience to the latter. For the particular effects of *Love*, are the particulars of our *Duty*. *Love* is the great and *general Law*, as *ill-will* and enmity are the *prime tranſgreſſion*: and the inſtances of Love are the inſtances of our obedience, as all the particular effects of ill-will are thoſe very inſtances wherein we diſobey. So that by running over all the ſpecial effects of love or ill-will, we may quickly find what are the Particulars of Duty and Tranſgreſſion.

Now the prime and moſt immediate Effects of *Love* are,

1. To do no *evil* to the perſons beloved, nor to take away from them any thing which is theirs, and which they have a right to. And this founds all the Duties of *Juſtice*. But
2. To do all *good offices* and ſhow *kindneſs* to them, which founds all the Duties of *Charity*.

And theſe two take in our whole Duty, both in *Piety* towards God, and alſo in *Righteouſneſs* towards men.

1. The proper and genuine effect of *love to God* is to do *no evil*, but in great readineſs to do *all the good* and ſervice which we can for him: in which two are implied all the branches of *piety*, which is the great and general Duty towards him.

To be *kind* and *ſerviceable* to God, is nothing more than to *honour* him. For his Nature is ſo perfect and ſelf-ſufficient, that it cannot receive; and ours ſo impotent and poor, that we cannot give any thing elſe but honour

honour to him. As on the other ſide, to do *evil* to him, is only to *diſhonour* him. For he is out of our power as for any other injury, and there is no way poſſible left for us to reach him, but only by our contumelious uſage and diſreſpect of him.

To do no *evil*, I ſay, but to be *kind* and *ſerviceable* to God, is nothing more but to *honour* him. It implies our having in our *minds honourable opinions of him*, and expreſſing in our *carriage* and *behaviour* a *reſpect* and *acknowledgement* of thoſe *glorious Attributes* and Perfections which are in him. The former, *viz.* the *high opinion* of his *Excellencies*, thoſe particularly which are inſtances of *Power* and *Goodneſs*, in our *minds*, is called *Honour*. The latter, *viz.* the *expreſſions* of this honourable opinion and acknowledgement in our *thoughts*, *words* or *actions*, is called *worſhip*.

And this *worſhip* is an acknowledgment either,

1. Of his *Truth* and *Knowledge*, in believing his Word, and taking things upon his Authority, ſeeing he neither *can* be deceived himſelf, nor *will* deceive us; which is *Faith*.
2. Of his Power and Goodneſs,
   1. In our *good-will* or kind affection for him as a moſt *beneficial* and *lovely* Being, which is called *LOVE*. And this as it effects a warm concernedneſs for his *honour*, chiefly when any thing oppoſes it, is *zeal*.
   2. In *relying* on him for the ſupply of our wants, as one that is moſt *able* and *ready* to relieve them, which is *truſt* and *dependance*. A particular effect whereof is a *hopeful making known* our deſires to him, in begging ſuch good things at his hands as we ſtand in need of; which is *Prayer*.
3. Of his *bounty* and *beneficence*, in a *grateful* ſenſe and affectionate owning that all the good things which

which we receive proceed from him; which is *thankfulness*.

4. Of his *Power* and *Justice*, in an *awful backwardness* to offend him, in regard he will not excuse, and can most severely punish all Offenders; which is *fear*.

5. Of his *Wisdom*, and *Rule* or *Authority*.

1. In *acquiescing in his Disposals*, as being most wise and most authentick; which is *submission* or *resignedness*.

2. In *performing his Commands*, as requiring things most fit for us, and most due from us; which is *obedience*.

These are those particular effects which flow from our *love of God*, and which make up that part of Duty which he requires from us towards *himself*.

And opposite to this *love of God*, and these *effects* and expressions of it, which are made our Duty, and particularly commanded under this Head, are our *hatred* and *ill-will* at him, with all the particular ways of expressing it, which are the contrary instances of sin, and those very Vices that are forbidden.

Now God, as I said, being out of our reach as to any possible way of being injured by us, or suffering evil from us, otherwise than by our *vilifying* him, and lessening of his *honour*: the prime effect of our hatred of him can be no other than our *dishonouring* him. And this may be instanced,

1. In *denying* either his *Being* or *Existence*, that he *is God*; which is *Atheism*: or his *Cognizance* and *Government* of the World; which is *Epicurism* or *denying Providence*.

2. In *thinking* or *speaking reproachfully* of him, which is *blasphemy*. And this, when it is such a *disfiguration* of his Being or *Nature*, as makes him an

an *arbitrary, fooliſh* and * *odious God*; is *ſuperſtition.*

* Δεισιδαιμονία, ſays *Theophraſtus*, is δειλία περὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον, Char. Eth. c. 17. ὁ εὐσεβὴς φίλος θεῷ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ θεοῦ. ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑστεται τοῖς θεοῖς ἄκων δέως, ὁ δὲ μεθ' ὑπολλὰ δίως δύσελπις ὢν δεδιὼς τὸς θεὸς ὥσπερ τὸς τυράννες, *Maximus Tyrius Diſſert.* 4. Agreeably whereto *Plutarch* ſays in *Alexandro*, ἐν οἷς τὸ μὲν θεοσεβὲς ἄνευ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων ἐ βέλεται.

3. In *having other Gods* beſides him; or worſhipping *him alone*, by *falſe* and † *lying* Similitudes and *limiting* Reſemblances (as are all *material Images*) not in *true* and *ſpiritual* manner as he is a God; which is *Idolatry*. And for the former ſort of *Idolatry*, viz. *worſhipping other Gods beſides him*, if it be a *worſhipping of wicked Spirits*, and that by *contracting* with them; it is *witchcraft* or *ſorcery*.

† The Idolatrous Images mentioned *Iſa.* 44. are called a Lye, *v.* 20. & *Hoſ.* 7. 1. *Jer.* 13. 25. In which ſenſe 'tis true of the *Romans*, that in changing the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image made like to a corruptible man; they turned the truth of God into a Lye, *Rom.* 1. 23, 25.

4. In *acting croſs* to all his *honourable Attributes* and Perfections, and *behaving* our ſelves in ſuch *diſreſpectful ſort*, as inſtead of *honouring* and *acknowledging*, doth *diſown* and reproach them.

And theſe Actings are either,

1. *Inwardly in our minds*, when by ſome work of theirs we deny or reproach either,
   1. His *Truth* and *Knowledge*, by *giving no heed*, nor taking any notice of what *he ſays*, but continuing ignorant of his word and pleaſure; which the Apoſtle calls *fooliſhneſs*: An effect whereof is *acting* againſt it *raſhly* and inconſiderately, which is *headineſs*. Or, when we do know it, by *giving no credit* or aſſent to it, but doubting or diſtruſting it; which is *unbelief*.
   2. His Power and Goodneſs.
      1. By our *ill-will* and *wiſhes* to him, when we *grieve* at any thing that makes *for him*, and take *delight* in ſuch things as we our ſelves,

or

or others can devise either *against himself*, or against Vertue and Goodness, which, as bearing his own Image, he owns above all things and is most tender of; and this is called *hating of God*. Which, as 'tis shown in an unconcernedness at such things as dishonour and affront him or his Religion; is *coldness* or *want of zeal*.

2. By our *distrust* of *him* and his *Providence*, when we *dare not rely* upon him for a supply of those things which we stand in need of, as if he were either *careless*, and mattered not what becomes of us; or *envious*, and grudged to have any of those good things which we want, to befal us; which is *distrust*. One effect whereof is our omitting to *seek* unto him, as *expecting nothing* from him; which is *not praying to him*.

3. His *bounty* and *beneficence*, by an *utter disregard* of what he doth for us, when we either *wholly overlook*, or after some small time *forget* it, and are not touched with any grateful sense or affectionate resentments upon it; which is *unthankfulness*.

4. His *Power* and *Justice*, by a *bold venturing* upon any thing that offends him, as if we neither valued his *favour* nor *displeasure*; which is *fearlessness*.

2. *Outwardly*, In *our lives and practice*, when by something in them we reproach and vilifie either,

1. His *Wisdom* and *Authority*,

1. In *disputing* and *striving* against his *Disposals*, when we quarrel at them as unwisely ordered, and would correct and better them

our

our ſelves; which is *contumacy* or *repining*.
2. In *breaking his Commands*, when we *reject* his pleaſure, and *prefer* our own; which is *diſobedience*.

2. His *Name*, when we uſe it *irreverently*, by invoking or calling upon him to judge us according to our *faithfulneſs* in what we ſpeak, either *cuſtomarily* and *lightly*, upon trivial or no occaſions; which is *common ſwearing*: Or *falſly*, when we either at preſent *mean*, or afterwards *perform* no ſuch thing as we *promiſed* or *affirmed* before him; which is *perjury*.

3. His *Word*, or *Miniſters*, or *other* things *conſecrated* to him, when we *treat* and uſe them as *cheap* and *common* things, in a *careleſs unmannerly* way, or, as it often happens, in *mirth* and *mockery*; which is *prophaneneſs*.

And theſe are ſuch expreſſions and effects of our hatred of God, as make up the Body of *impiety* or tranſgreſſions *immediately* againſt *God himſelf*, all which he has moſt ſtrictly *forbidden*.

So that for our whole *Duty towards God*, which is implied in the general Law of *piety* or *godlineſs*, it contains in it all theſe effects of *LOVE*, which are *commanded Duties*; as *ungodlineſs* or impiety contains all theſe expreſſions of *hatred*, which are ſo many particular forbidden ſins.

The Laws *commanding* are the Law of *honour*, of *worſhip*, of *faith*, of *love*, of *zeal*, of *truſt and dependance*, of *prayer*, of *thankfulneſs*, of *fear*, of *ſubmiſſion and reſignedneſs*, of *obedience*.

And the Laws *forbidding*, are the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *atheiſm*, againſt *denying Providence*, againſt *blaſphemy*, againſt *ſuperſtition*, againſt *idolatry*, againſt *witchcraft and ſorcery*, againſt *fooliſhneſs*, againſt

headiness, against *unbelief*, against *hating God*, against *want of zeal*, against *distrust of him*, against *not praying to him*, against *unthankfulness*, against *fearlessness*, against *contumacy* or *repining*, against *disobedience*, against *common swearing*, against *perjury*, against *prophaneness*.

And then as for the

2. Sort of Love, our love to *men*; it implies in it all the Duties contained in the third Branch of St. *Paul*'s Division, *viz. righteousness*; as shall be shewn in the *next* Chapter.

CHAP. III.

Of the particular Duties contained under Justice and Charity.

The Contents.

Of the particular Duties contained under Justice and Charity. Both are only expressions of Love, which is the fulfilling of the Law. Of the particular sins against both. Of scandal. Of the combination of Justice and Charity in a state that results from both, viz. *Peace. Of the several Duties comprehended under it. Of the particular sins reducible to unpeaceableness. Of the latitude of the word Neighbour, to whom all these dutiful expressions are due. Its narrowness in the Jewish sense. Its universality in the Christian.*

FOR the third general Duty, *righteousness*, or our Duty towards our *Neighbour*; our *love of men* will lead us into the several Laws which it containeth. Whilst in every concern we have Love for them, we have no Temptation to commit any sin against them, nor are in Danger of failing in any point of our Duty towards them. *He that loveth his Brother*, says S. *John*, *abideth in light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him*

him, 1 Joh. 2. 10. For the first effect of love, *our doing no hurt or injury to any man,* founds all the Laws of *Justice*; and the latter *our doing good and shewing all kindness,* founds all the particular Laws of *Charity*; in which two are comprehended all those several Duties which God has enjoyned towards *other men.*

The first, I say, founds all the particular Laws of *Justice.* For in that we do no *evil* or *injury* to our Neighbour, nor hurt him by prejudicing his *just Rights,* or taking away from him any thing that is his; is implied that we do not wrong or endamage him,

1. In his *Life,* by taking it away either,
   1. In *private force* and *violent assassination,* which is *murder.*
   2. Under colour of *Justice,* by a false charge of *capital* crimes; which is *false witness.*
2. In his *reputation,* by sullying or impairing it through a *lying* and false imputation of disparaging things to him; which is *slander* or *calumny.*
3. In his *belief* and *expectation,* by reproaching and abusing it either,
   1. By *deceiving* him against his *Right,* to his hurt, in a false speech of what is past or present; which is *lying.*
   2. By frustrating his expectations, which were raised by our promise of something that is to come; which is *unfaithfulness* or *perfidy.*
4. In his *Bed,* by invading that which the Contract of Marriage has made involable; which is *adultery.* inviolable
5. In his *Goods* or Estate, and all wrong herein proceeds from our *unsatisfiedness* with our own, and our *greedy longing* and ungovernable desire of that which is his; which is *covetousness.* The effects and instances whereof are,

1. In *taking* away from him that which is his, either,
   1. *Directly*, By secret or open force, and without his knowledge and consent; which is *stealing* or *robbery*.
   2. *Indirectly*, or by *forcing his allowance*, and extorting a necessitated consent from him. Which is done by taking advantage.
      1. Of his *impotence*, and inability to resist and contend with us; which is *oppression*.
      2. Of his *necessity*, when he cannot be without something which we have, and so is forced to take it upon our own terms; which is *extortion* and *depressing in bargaining*.
      3. Of his *ignorance*, when we outwit him, and trepan and over-reach him in Bargaining and Commerce; which is *circumvention*, *fraud* or *deceit*. The *wiliness* and subtle Art wherein is called *craftiness*.
2. In *denying* all kindnesses and good things to him, in *unmercifulness*, *uncharitableness*, &c. Of which I shall discourse under the next Head.

All these Particulars of *Justice* now mentioned, are natural effects of *love to our Neighbour*, in as much as it makes us keep off from offering any *injury* or doing any *evil* to him. Upon which account S. *Paul* says of it, that as for these particular Laws of *Justice*, it *fulfils* them *all*. Which he shows by an induction of such Particulars as I have named. *He that loveth another*, saith he, *hath fulfilled the Law*, *viz.* that part of it which requires Duties of Justice towards others. *For this*, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, *thou shalt not kill*, *thou shalt not steal*, *thou shalt not bear false witness*, *thou shalt not covet*; which are the five last Commandments of the Decalogue: *and if there be any other Commandment*,

ment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* Now *Love worketh no ill,* neither theſe nor any other, *to his Neighbour; therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law,* Rom. 13, 8, 9, 10.

And as this firſt effect of Love to our Neighbour, *viz. its keeping us back from offering any injury or doing any evil to him,* contains in it all the Laws of *Juſtice*: ſo doth its other effect, *our doing all good offices, and ſhewing kindneſs to them,* comprehend in it all the particular Laws of Charity wherewith we ſtand obliged towards other men.

Love is not only *innocent* and *harmleſs,* and careful to create no trouble, nor occaſion any prejudice; but moreover it is all *kindneſs, benevolence* and *good nature,* and *diligent* in creating all the *pleaſure* and *delight* it can to its *beloved.*

Now this *goodneſs, kind heartedneſs,* or *deſire to pleaſe and delight others,* will be an *univerſal* cauſe of *beneficence* or doing good to them, and make us caſt to pleaſe them in ſo many ways, and advantage them in ſo many relations, as we can at any time be placed in. In *particular* it will effect theſe Vertues in the *Caſes* following:

1. As *to what we ſee them to be in themſelves,* and in this reſpect it produces in us,
   1. If they are *worthy* and *vertuous,* a *great opinion* and venerable eſteem for them; which is *honour.*
   2. If they have *honeſt hearts,* but yet are *weak in judgment* and knowledge, a *compaſſionate ſenſe* of their weakneſs, and an endeavour to relieve them; which is *pity* and *ſuccour.*

   And if this *weakneſs* be inſtanced in *judging* thoſe things to be a *matter of ſin,* and ſo *unlawful* for them to *do,* which no *Law of God* has *forbidden*; and which therefore we, *who better underſtand* it, ſee plainly that we *lawfully may do*;

and

and *our practice* of it *before them*, who, distrusting their own skill, are swayed more by our example than their own opinions, would draw *them* on to *practise* it too, though their own *Conscience condemns* it, which would be to them a *sin*; in this Case the way of Loves affording *pity* and *succour*, is by making us *forgo the lawful practice* of it at *that* time; which is *restraining of our Christian Liberty for our Brothers edification.*

For this *Vertue* there was great place in the *Apostles Times* among the *Christianized Jews*. For the Jewish Law placed *Religion* in *forbearing* certain sorts of *Meats* as *unclean* and *unlawful*; and particularly in *abstaining from Meats offered to, and set before an Idol God*, as it was in the *Gentile Sacrifices*. And the *simpler* sort and *weaker* people, who had all along placed so much Religion in these things, could not be brought over without much *patience* of *instruction*, and a *long usage*, to know and see that *Liberty* which, upon their becoming *Christians*, they had obtained either to *use* or *forbear* them. And whilst the judgments and opinions of many good people were in *these* things thus *weak*; the *Apostles* that they might secure the *innocency* of their *practice* under their *errour*, and prevent their being *scandalized* or *drawn on to do what themselves condemned as evil* through the *authority* of other mens *examples*, whom they looked upon as *wiser Christians*, are wont very much to press this part of *Charity, our using of our Christian Liberty*, not in all things for our own ease, but for our *weak Brethrens edification*. Particularly S. *Paul* is earnest in it, *Rom.* 14. 1 *Cor.* 8.

3. If

3. If they are *wicked* and vicious, this *kind-heartedneſs* will effect in us a *pious admonition* to reduce and reclaim them; which is *friendly reproof.*

And whether they be *good* or *evil*, *weak* or *ſtrong*; it will produce an *affectionate tenderneſs* and near concern for them, ſuch as we have for thoſe of our own Kindred; which is *brotherly kindneſs.*

2. As to what *we ſee them receive from others.* And in this reſpect this kindneſs and deſire to pleaſe effects in us,
   1. If it were *good*, an expreſſion of *pleaſure* and *rejoycing* in it; which is *Congratulation.*
   2. If *evil*, then
      1. If we *cannot redreſs* and *remove* it, it will make us help to *bear* it in concern and *ſorrow* for it; which is *compaſſion.*
      2. If we *can*, it makes us *relieve* and eaſe them of it. Which it doth if the evil be
         1. Of *want*, by *ſupplying* it according to our *power*; which is *Alms* and *Diſtribution.*
         2. Of *diſgrace*, by *endeavouring to hide* and ſmother it where it is *deſerved*; which is *covering* and *concealing of our Brethren's defects:* and by *confuting* and wiping it off where we know they have not *deſerved* it; which is *vindicating our Neighbours reputation.*

3. As to that *place and quality which they bear in reſpect of us*, this *kindneſs* and *deſire to pleaſe* will exert it ſelf, if they are perſons
   1. *Below* us, in a *freedom of acceſs* and eaſineſs of being ſpoke with; which is *affability* or *graciouſneſs.*
   2. *Equal* to us or *below* us, in a *readineſs* * *to do good Offices*, & to make their concern our own; which

* Ξενοφῶντος ſays Andronicus Rhodius, is ἕξις ἐκτικὸς εὐποιΐκὴ, lib. περὶ παθῶν.

which is *courteousness* or *officiousness*. And in pursuit of this in *stooping down* to some things *below* our *Rank* and *Quality*, either in words or actions; which is *condescension*.

And if this *courtesy* be used towards *Strangers*, and expressed in *entertaining them at our own house*; 'tis *hospitality*.

3. Towards *all men whomsoever* we converse with, it will beget,
   1. A *quietness of temper*, and *tameness of intercourse*; which is called *gentleness*.
   2. A *fair interpretation*, and putting the best sense upon any thing that is done or spoken; which is *candor*.
   3. A *maintenance of good agreement* and correspondence; which is *unity*.
4. And as to what we *our selves* receive from others; this *kindness of nature* and *desire to please* will produce,
   1. If it were *good*, a *grateful sense* and *affectionate resentment* of it, with a *longing desire* to *requite* it; which is *thankfulness*.
   2. If *evil* and *injury*; then it will effect,
      1. A * *slowness* to take *provocation*, and to be angry at it; which is *meekness* or *lenity*.

      2. When the wrong is such that we may *justly* and *reasonably* be *angred* at it, an *easiness of being intreated*, and a readiness to be appeased; which is *placableness*.

      3. And for the *requital* of the wrong if it were,
         1. Only an *affront* or light injury, it makes us seek none, but pardon and put it up; which

* πραότης is a Vertue that makes us δυναδμιε ρειν ἐγκλήμασι ὴ ὀλιγωρίας μετρίως. ὴ τὸ μὴ ταχέως ὀρμᾶν ἐπὶ τὴν τιμωρίαν· τὸ μὴ εὐκίνητον πρὸς ὀργάς, ἄπειρον ὂν τοῦ ἤθει ὴ ἀμιλόνεικον, Andron. Rhod. lib. περὶ παθῶν.

which is *forgiving injuries.* And inſtead of that, to render in return to it *kindneſs*, and ſuch *good Offices* as are in our *power*, as *praying to God for them*, and *bleſſing*, or ſpeaking all the good which we can of them as often as we have occaſion to mention them, always are, which is *doing good to enemies*; or, as our Saviour ſays, *bleſſing them that curſe us, and praying for our enemies*, Mat. 5 44.

2. Too *burthenſome* or *ſcandalous* to be paſt over, ſo that 'tis fit to puniſh it: then in exacting,

1. *Puniſhment*, as being an unpleaſant work, it makes us *bear long* before we come to it; which is *long-ſuffering.*

2. *Satisfaction*, it ſuffers us not to go to the *utmoſt* of what might be exacted; but through a care of *our enemies*, as well as of *our ſelves*, to take up with ſuch a competency as is no more than they can *bear*; which is *mercifulneſs.*

Theſe are ſuch particular Laws of Charity, as naturally flow from this effect of *love to men*, our *kindneſs and deſire to benefit and pleaſe them.* And all theſe effects of love are parts of Duty, and thoſe ſeveral Precepts which God has commanded us to keep and obey.

And as our *love of men* with this effect of it, *our deſire to benefit* and pleaſure them, includes in it all the inſtances of *Charity*: ſo doth our *hatred* of them with a *delight to ſpite and trouble them*, which naturally flows from it, comprehend in it all the contrary inſtances of *uncharitableneſs.*

For this *il-will* and *habitual hatefulneſs of temper* will effect in us, oppoſite to *goodneſs* and a *deſire to pleaſe and delight others*, an *univerſal miſchievouſneſs*, or forwardneſs to

make others work, to put them to * pains and trouble, and create them sorrow; which is called *wickedness*. And this will express it self in creating our Neighbour discontent and vexation, in all those ways wherein we are concerned with him, or conversant about him.

* πονηρία ὁ ἐπ παρασκευῇ εἰς τίνα παρὰ τῦ πόνῳ γινόμενον, Suid. πονηρία meo judicio est vitium animi, quo homo inclinatur ad nocendum aliis etiam sine causa, sed ex quadam in malum proclivitate; qualis est malitia Dæmonis; quem ea de causa πονηρὸν appellamus, Tolet. in Cap. 1. Ep. ad Rom. v. 29.

For instance,

1. As for any thing which we see he has,
   - 1. Of *Vertue* and *Goodness*; instead of *honouring*, it will make us *wish ill* to him, and *set him at nought*; which is *hating* and *despising him*.
   - 2. Of *weakness* and *ignorance*; it will make us not to restrain our selves at all in the *use of our Christian Liberty*, for his sake; but to act to the utmost of what is lawful, though he be *scandalized* by it, or encouraged, upon the authority of our example, to scandal is an occasion of sin. *Let no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall* [σκάνδαλον] *in his Brothers way*, Rom. 14. 13. commit what his own Conscience tells him is a sin; which is *scandalizing* or *making him to offend*.
2. As for what we see him do or receive; if it be
   - 1. *Good*, it expresses it self in *grief* and *trouble* at it; which is *envy* or an *evil eye*.
   - 2. *Evil*, instead of raising *pity* and *compassion*, it makes us to take a *pleasure* in it, and to be *glad* of it; which is *rejoycing in evil*.

   And if the evil be
   - 1. Of *want*, it will effect a refusal of all supply; which is *uncharitableness*.
   - 2. Of *disgrace*; then if it were
     - 1. *Unjust* and *undeserved*, it lets it stick without any endeavours to wipe it off; which is *not vindicating him*.
     - 2. *Just*

2. *Juſt* and *truly chargeable*, or but any way *ſuſpicious*, inſtead of *concealing*, it *publiſhes* and *proclaims* it in diſparaging Characters and Repreſentations of him; which ſort of detraction is *evil ſpeaking*.

This in the general, as it is ſhown in a *forwardneſs to paſs Sentence againſt men*, in undervaluing and diſparaging judgments upon what they do, or ſay, overlooking all the Vertues and detecting only the faults and failings of it; is *cenſoriouſneſs*.

In the objecting and publiſhing whereof, from the different *manners* and *ends* of the publication, it paſſes under ſeveral names.

For as for the *manner*, if that Publication be

1. In their *abſence*, in a *ſofter*, and, as it often happens, in a more *ſecret* way, under a pretence of favour and kindneſs to them to get a greater regard to what we ſay againſt them; 'tis *backbiting*. Which when it is not publiſhed *aloud*, nor ſpoke out for *any* or *all* of the Company indifferently to hear; but is told in ſecret to ſome *one* or *more*; 'tis *whiſpering*.

2. Either in their *abſence*, or *openly* and before their face, in a more *violent* and *ſeverer* way, being expreſſed in † *bitter words*, and great vehemence; 'tis *railing* or *reviling*.

† *Maledictio ſi petulantius jactatur, convitium eſt*, Cic. Orat. *pro* M. Cælio.

And as for the *end*, if that diſparaging publication be

1. To make them *infamous*, by objecting to them,
   1. Our own *favours*; 'tis *upbraiding*.
   2. Their *failings*; 'tis *reproaching*.

2 To make them *ridiculous*, by expoſing their *leſſer* and more innocent infirmities, or ſuch as have in them more of ſhame than miſchief; 'tis called *mocking*.

3. As for that Place and Quality which they bear in reſpect of us, this *forwardneſs* to *vex* and *diſtaſte* them will have theſe effects.

1. If they are perſons *below* us, it will exert it ſelf in making us ſtately and *hard to be ſpoken with*, contrary to *affability*; which is *difficulty of acceſs*. And if this *inferiority* be, as we apprehend, in *Parts* or *Endowments*, it will effect a *contemptuous* and undervaluing *behaviour* towards them, expreſſed either in *words* or *actions*, for our *ſport* or *intereſt*; which is *affront* or *contumely*.

2. If *equal* to us, or *below* us, in an *averſeneſs* to all good offices, and an *utter unconcernedneſs* for them, which is oppoſite to courteſy, and may be called *uncourteouſneſs*. And as a further effect of this, a *ſcorning* to *ſtoop* down to any thing *below* us, whereby we may ſerve or pleaſure them; which is a mixture of *pride* and *ill nature*, oppoſite to *condeſcenſion*, and may be called *ſtiffneſs*. And if this *uncourteouſneſs* be towards Strangers, and expreſſed in *denying* them *entertainment* when a *reaſonable occaſion* calls for it; 'tis *unhoſpitableneſs*.

3. Towards *all men* with whom we converſe, it will beget,

1. A *frowardneſs of temper*, an *imperious churliſhneſs of intercourſe* oppoſite to *gentileneſs*; which is *ſurlineſs*.

2. A *croſs interpretation*, and † *perverting to an ill ſenſe* all that is done or ſpoken, oppoſite to *candour*; which is *malignity*.

† κακοήθειά ἐστι τὸ ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ὑπολαμβάνειν ἅπαντα, *Ariſt. Rhet. l.2.c.13.*

3. An

3. An *unquietneſs of behaviour* in picking quarrels, and creating difference; which is *turbulence* and *unquietneſs*.

4. As for what we receive from them, it will produce,

1. If it were *good* and *beneficial*, an *utter diſregard* of it, and unconcernedneſs for him who did it; which is *unthankfulneſs*.

2. If *evil* and *injury*, then

1. A *haſty catching* at the ſmalleſt provocation, and a *ſudden violent* diſpleaſure upon it, which is *paſſionateneſs*, *anger*, or *fierceneſs*. The expreſſions whereof are,

1. In *ſtrife* of arguing and debate, *variance*.
2. In *earneſtneſs* and violent degree of heat, *bitterneſs*.
3. In *loudneſs* and noiſe of words, *clamour* or *brawling*.

2. When 'tis *once admitted*, a *retaining a laſting impreſſion* of it in our minds and malicious thoughts and deſigns againſt him that did it; which is *hatred*, *wrath*, *enmity* or *malice*.

3. A great difficulty in laying this conceived grudge aſide, and being appeaſed when they ſeek for a reconcilement; which is *implacableneſs*.

4. An *impatient deſire* of *requiting* the injury, and returning it upon him that offered it; which is *revenge*. Some particular expreſſions whereof are, inſtead of *bleſſing* or good language, and *praying for them*, a return of *curſing* or reproachful ſpeech and *imprecation*.

And in effecting this *requital*, it will produce in exacting,

1. *Puniſhment*,

1. *Punishment*, as being a most pleasant and desired work, *hastiness* and *impatience*, opposite to *long suffering*.
2. *Satisfaction*, a going to the utmost limits of power and extremities of infliction; which is *rigour*.

And all these Particulars, as they are most natural effects and expressions of *ill will* and *hatred* towards *our Neighbour*, are transgressions also of the Law of *Charity*, and so many several instances of disobedience, which under this Head of *uncharitableness* God has most straitly forbidden.

So that in this *general* Law of *love to men* are contained all the following, whether *commanding* or *forbidding* Laws.

The Laws commanding are the Law of *Justice* in all its instances, which will appear by the contrary prohibitions; of *Charity*, wherein are implied the Law of *goodness* or *kindness*, of *honour*, of *pity* and *succour* of *restraining our Christian Liberty for our weak Brothers edification*, of *friendly reproof*, of *brotherly kindness*, of *congratulation*, of *compassion*, of *alms* and *distribution*, of *covering* and *concealing their defects*, of *vindicating their reputation*, of *affability* or *graciousness*, of *courtesie* and *officiousness*, of *condescension*, of *hospitality*, of *gentleness*, of *candour*, of *unity*, of *thankfulness*, of *meekness* or *lenity*, of *placableness*, of *forgiving injuries*, of *doing good to enemies*, and, when nothing more is in our power, *praying for them*, and *blessing* or *speaking what is good of them* when we take occasion to mention them, of *long-suffering*, of *mercifulness*.

And opposite to these the *forbidding* Laws are, The Law against *injustice* with all its Train, which are the Law against *murther*, against *false witness*, against *slander* or *calumny*, against *lying*, against *unfaithfulness* or *perfidy*,

perfidy, againſt *adultery*, againſt *covetouſneſs*, againſt *ſtealing* or *robbery*, againſt *oppreſſion*, againſt *extortion* and *depreſſing in bargaining*, againſt *circumvention* and *deceit*, againſt *craftineſs*.

And the Law againſt *uncharitableneſs*, with all its Particulars, which are the Law againſt *maliciouſneſs* or *hatefulneſs*, againſt *wickedneſs*, againſt *deſpiſing* and *hating them that are good*, againſt *giving ſcandal to weak Brethren*, againſt *envy* or *an evil eye*, againſt *rejoicing in evil*, againſt *uncharitableneſs in alms*, againſt *not vindicating an innocent mans reputation*, againſt *evil-ſpeaking*, againſt *cenſoriouſneſs*, againſt *back-biting*, againſt *whiſpering*, againſt *railing* or *reviling*, againſt *upbraiding*, againſt *reproaching*, againſt *mocking*, againſt *difficulty of acceſs*, againſt *contumely or affront*, againſt *uncourteouſneſs*, againſt *ſtiffneſs or uncondeſcenſion*, againſt *unhoſpitableneſs*, againſt *ſurlineſs*, againſt *malignity*, againſt *turbulence* and *unquietneſs*, againſt *unthankfulneſs*, againſt *anger* and *paſſionateneſs*, againſt *debate* and *variance*, againſt *bitterneſs*, againſt *clamour* and *brawling*, againſt *hatred* and *malice*, againſt *implacableneſs*, againſt *revenge*, againſt *curſing* or *reproaching enemies*, and *imprecation of them*, againſt *haſtineſs to puniſh*, againſt *rigour*.

All which *Inſtances* and *Oppoſites* both of *Juſtice* and *Charity*, are moſt natural effects of *Love* and *Hatred towards other men*, and ſo many Particulars of *Duty* and of *ſin*.

And from both theſe general Laws of *Juſtice* and *Charity to our Neighbour*, or our keeping off from all things that may offend and injure, and doing all that may pleaſe or any way delight him; will reſult that *ſtate of good agreement* and intercourſe of friendlineſs, which is called *peace*. Which, as it implies an *union of minds* oppoſite to *Controverſies* and *Diſputes*, is called *unanimity*; and, as containing an *agreeableneſs* and mutual

tual correſpondence of *hearts* and affections, *concord*.

In order to the procurement of this *peace* is required,

1. In the *temper*, ſuch a mixture of *Love* and *quietneſs* as renders men *tame* and *contented* under the preſent ſtate of things, and averſe from contention and controverſie; which is *peaceableneſs*.
2. In the *practice*, a doing ſuch things as,
   1. *Prevent ſtrife*, whether that be done,
      1. Towards our *Equals* and *Inferiors*, by complying and bearing with their weakneſſes, and going down from our own liberty where the exerciſe of it would give offence and cauſe difference; which is *condeſcenſion* and *compliance*.
      2. Towards our *Governours*, by keeping within our own ſphere, and medling only with thoſe things which are parts of our own Duty, not incroaching upon their Office, or thruſting our ſelves into their Adminiſtration; which is *doing our own buſineſs*.
   2. *Compoſe* and put an end to it, and this is done by *making amends* and recompencing that *contumely* or *wrong* which occaſion'd it; which is *ſatisfaction for injuries*.

And a care not only thus to preſerve peace our ſelves, but alſo to maintain it amongſt others; by an *induſtrious endeavour* to keep up a right underſtanding and agreement amongſt men, and, when they happen to differ, to reconcile them and make them friends again; is *peace-making*.

And then from the two *general* tranſgreſſions oppoſite to theſe, *viz. injuſtice* and *uncharitableneſs to our Neighbour*, or an induſtrious averſeneſs from all things that may pleaſe and advantage; and a forwardneſs in all things to hurt and vex him, will ariſe that *ſtate of difference*

difference and intercourſe of ill Offices, that is called *enmity:* which, as it implies a *ſeparation and claſhing of hearts* and affections, is called *diſcord.*

To the production of this evil ſtate concur

1. In the *temper* ſuch a mixture of *heat* and *ill nature* as renders men reſtleſs under their preſent ſtate, and pleaſed and delighted in ſcuffling and ſtrife; which is *unpeaceableneſs.*
2. In the *practice*, a doing ſuch things as at firſt raiſe and engender, and afterwards foment and maintain it; and of this ſort, beſides all the inſtances of wrong and injuſtice which we heard of before, is
   1. An *envious ſtrife* of being better thought of, and out-doing one another; which is *emulation* or *provoking one another.*
   2. A *going beyond* our own *place* or *buſineſs*, and either *uſurping* upon other mens *Offices*, or *ſawcily intermedling* with their *affairs*; which is *pragmaticalneſs*, or *being buſie bodies.* And this, when it is taken up in *reporting between the Parties at odds* ſuch things as we have heard or ſeen, which are fit ſtill more to *exaſperate* their minds, and to *widen the breach* is *tale-bearing.* Which when it is of things, not only *ſeen*, but even *ſuſpected*, and in a ſecret diſſembled manner; is *whiſpering.*

      And if the difference was at firſt occaſioned by *injury* and wrong, that which goes moſt directly to continue it, is *avowing* what was done, and making no amendment; which is *not ſatisfying for injuries.*

And for the outward effects and expreſſions of this enmity and diſcord; it ſhews it ſelf,

1. In a *struggling* for mastery and victory; which is *strife* or *contention*.
2. In *separating* themselves into *Parties* and Companies, according to the difference of their love or hatred and their espoused interests; which is *Division* or *Faction*. And this in *religious* affairs, when the obstinate espousal that leads on to it is of *damnable opinions*, is *heresie*; when of *needlesly separated Parties*, it is *schism*.
3. A rude concourse of Parties in scuffling and blows; which is *tumult*.

So that besides all the Particulars above mentioned, which are contained under the general Heads, *Justice* and *Charity*, there is included moreover in this *third* Head of Duty, *righteousness*, all these Laws of *peace* which result from the combination of them both.

And the effects of love or *commanding Laws* in this, are the Law of *peace* and *concord* with all its Train; as are the Law of *peaceableness*, of *condescension* and *compliance* of *doing our own business*, of *satisfying for injuries*, of *peace-making*.

And opposite to them the effects of *hatred*, or *forbidding* Laws, are the Law against *enmity* and *discord* with all its Particulars, as are the Law against *unpeaceableness*, against *emulation* or *provoking one another*, against *pragmaticalness* or *being busie bodies*, against *tale-bearing*, against *whispering*, against *not satisfying for injuries*, against *strife* or *contention*, against *division* and *faction* in the State, against *heresie* and against *schism* in the Church, against *tumult*.

So that in this third Branch of Duty, *righteousness*, or *our Duty towards our Neighbour*, are implied all these several, whether *commanding* or *forbidding* Laws, which are comprehended under these three *general* Vertues, *viz.* *Justice*, *Charity* and *Peace*.

And

And as for all the things which are commanded or forbidden by all these Laws, they are due to our *Neighbour* in the *greatest latitude* and *utmost generality* of that Name, as it signifies *any* whom we have to do with of *all mankind.*

The *Jews* indeed were of a *narrower Spirit*, and of a more *contracted kindness.* They thought themselves bound to exercise all that Justice and Charity which their Law required, towards the *men of their own Nation*, or such of the *Gentiles*, who leaving their Heathen Idolatries would become *Proselytes*, and turn to their Religion. But as for all the world besides, they accounted themselves *disobliged* from all expressions of *kindness*, and *good affection* towards them; nay even from *all intercourse of common civility*, and *conversation* with them. They would not so much as come under their Roof, or eat with them at the same Table, or either give or receive any civilities or friendly expressions from them. S. *Peter*, when he entred into the house of *Cornelius*, a *Gentile Centurion*, told them that they *all knew very well how it is not* LAWFUL *for any man that is a* JEW *to* KEEP COMPANY, *or* COME IN *unto one of* ANOTHER NATION: for which cause he himself had not come to them, had not *God* taught him to correct his *Country-custom*, and *to call no man*, of what Nation soever, *common* or *unclean*, Acts 10. 28. And upon the account of this freedom which he then took, the *Christian Jews*, who were of the Circumcision, *contended with him when he came up to Jerusalem*, reproving him for this, That *he went in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them*, Acts 11. 2, 3. The Woman of *Samaria* wondred, that *Jesus*, *being a Jew*, *should* vouchsafe to *ask* so much as a Cup of cold *water* from *her who was a Samaritan*; this being the *stiffness* of the *Jewish Principle*, *To have no dealings with the*

Samaritans, John 4. 9. Nay, to that height of unkindneſs had they arrived, as to *deny* even the moſt *common Offices of humanity and Charity, to ſhow the way, or give directions for a journey* to any *Gentile* man: Which ſeveral of the learned * Heathens have ſmartly reproved, and moſt juſtly complained of. All which they did upon a ſuppoſition that the † *Neighbour*, to whom love and kindneſs was required by their Law, was only a *Fellow-Jew*, a *Brother-Iſraelite*, and a *man of their own Nation*. Which *narrow* and *contracted ſenſe* they thought they had good reaſon to fix upon it from an expreſſion in their own Law, *Lev.* 19. where in the repetition of this great and general Duty of *Love to our Neighbour*, the word *Neighbour* is ſet in conjunction with and explained by *one of the Children of their own People*. For thus 'tis ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not avenge nor bear any grudge againſt the Children of thy People, but thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, v. 18.

* *Non monſtrare vias eadem niſi ſacra colenti: Quæſitum ad fontem ſolos deducere verpos*, Juv. Sat. 14. *Apud ipſos fides obſtinata, miſericordia in promptu: ſed adverſus omnes alios hoſtile odium.* Tacit. Hiſt. l. 5.

† *Excipit omnes Gentiles, cum dicit proximum ſuum.* Dict. Rabbin. Vid. Hor. Hebr. in Luc. c. 10. v. 29.

Thus *limited* and *confined* was the *Jewiſh Love*; God had choſen them out of all the Nations of the World for a *peculiar people*, and had hedged them in from the reſt of mankind by *peculiar Laws* and a *peculiar Government*. And upon this they concluded, that whatſoever God required of them, he did it as their *political King*, and as the *particular Head* of the Jewiſh Nation; and that he intended thoſe Laws which he gave them as Rules for their behaviour towards their *own Brethren*, and *Fellow Subjects*, not towards *Strangers* of Foreign Nations.

But as for our *Lord* and Sovereign *Jeſus Chriſt*, he is a *Governour*, and has enacted all his Laws, not for the guidance of any *one Nation* or People, but of *all the world*. He told his Diſciples when he ſent them out to preach the Goſpel, That *all power was given to him both in Heaven and in Earth*; and thereupon commiſſioned them

them to *go out*, and proclaim his Laws, not to the *Jews* alone, but *to all Nations*, Mat. 28 18, 19. And by this *universality* of his Empire he has *taken away the partition-wall which was between Jews and Gentiles, having made them both one*, Ephes. 2. 14. So that now there can be no further colour or pretence for a limited and restrained affection; all the World by this means being now again made *one People*, *Fellow-Subjects*, and *Brethren*, and *Neighbours* unto one another.

Whatever the *Jews* conceived of their Laws therefore, 'tis plain that all the Laws of *Christ*, which commanded all manner of *Justice*, *Charity*, and *Peaceableness*, and forbid all expressions of *uncharitableness*, *injury* and *unpeaceableness* towards our *Neighbours*, make these things due to all *mankind*. It is not either *distance of Country*, nor *contrariety of interest*, no nor, what is most of all presumed to exempt us from the obligation of these Duties, *diversity of opinion* or *persuasion in matters of Religion*, which takes away from any man his right to all that kindness and advantage from us, which all these forementioned Laws give him. But of whatsoever *Country*, *Calling*, or *Religion* he be, he is the *Neighbour* here meant, to whom all these instances of Love, which are the particular Laws of Duty, must be performed.

And this our Saviour has determined once for all in his answer to the *Lawyer*, Luke 10. For when he put the Question to him, *Who is my Neighbour*, to whom the Law commands all these things to be done? *ver.* 29. *Jesus* answers him by a Parable, that it is every man in the World whom he may at any time have to do with, although he be never so much a *Stranger*, nay of a party and opinion in Religion never so contrary unto his. For what *Religion* was ever more *odious* unto any one, than the *Samaritan* was to the *Jews*? So great a detestation

ſtation had they of it, that when they would give a Name of the vileſt ignominy and greateſt hatred to *Chriſt* himſelf, they told him he was a *Samaritan*, and joined with it ſuch a farther Character as they thought would beſt ſuit with it, *his being poſſeſſed with a Devil. Say we not well*, anſwer'd they, *that thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a Devil?* Joh. 8. 48. But yet for all this height of enmity between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, he tells the *Jewiſh* Lawyer, who demanded of him *who* was his *Neighbour*, that *a* Jewiſh *man fell among Thieves, who wounded him, and left him half dead; and that a Samaritan coming by had compaſſion on him, and bound up his wounds, and took care of him.* Hereby inſinuating, That any man, though ſo contrary to him in Religion as theſe two were to one another, is the Neighbour whom the Law intends; and therefore in full anſwer to his Queſtion, he bids him, *Go, and do ſo likewiſe*, Luke 10. 30, to 38.

CHAP. IV.

Of our Duties to men in particular Relations.

The Contents.

Of our Duties to other men in particular Relations. The Duties enjoined, and the ſins prohibited towards Kings and Princes, Biſhops and other Miniſters. The particular duties and ſins, in the relation of Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Brethren and Siſters, Maſters and Servants. Of the two Sacraments, and Repentance.

A recital of all particular Duties enjoined, and ſins prohibited to Chriſtians. Of the harmleſneſs of a defective enumeration, the Duties of the Goſpel being ſuggeſted not only outwardly in Books, but inwardly by mens own Paſſions and Conſciences.

BUT beſides all theſe Laws contained in the general Command of *Love* to our Neighbour, which require ſomething of us to be performed or forborn towards *all mankind*; there are yet ſome more *particular* inſtances of it, which make ſome things due from us, not as we are left at large towards *all men indifferently*, but as we ſtand more *peculiarly related towards ſome*; whether that *relation* be

1. *Publick* and *Political*, of *Prince* and *Subjects*, *Miniſters* and *People*.
2. More *Private* and *Domeſtick*; as is that between
   1. *Husband* and *Wife*.
   2. *Parents* and *Children*.
   3. *Brethren* and *Siſters*.
   4. *Maſter* and *Servants*.

For in all theſe *ſpecial Relations*, *love to our Neighbour* exerts it ſelf in *ſpecial* effects; which are all ſuch peculiar Laws, as bind us, not towards *all men indifferently*, but *only* towards *them* whom we ſtand *ſo related to*.

To begin with the firſt.

1. The firſt *relation*, from whence reſult ſeveral effects, of Love, and inſtances of Duty towards *ſome particular* men, *diſtinct* from what we owe to the *reſt* of all mankind; is that which is between *us* and our *Publick* or *Political Governours* and Rulers. And becauſe we are Members of *two* great Societies, *one a Society in things outward and temporal, for our happineſs in this world*, which is called the *State*; and the *other* in *things ſacred, ſpiritual and eternal, for our happineſs in the next world*, which

which is the *Church*; and God has his *Repreſentatives* and *Vicegerents* in them both: therefore under this *Head* are *two* ſorts of effects of Love and inſtances of Duty,

1. Towards *Civil Governours*, viz. *Kings* and *Princes*.
2. Towards *Eccleſiaſtical*, viz. *Biſhops* and *Miniſters*.

1. Then towards our *Publick Civil Governours*, our *Kings* and *Princes*, the fruits of *Love* both in *abſtaining from all evil*, and *ſhowing all kindneſs and good will to them*; will be as follows.

1. Since they are both placed *above* us and ſet *over* us, our *Love* to them will produce in us, both an *opinion of their preheminence and excellence*, as being Gods Deputies and Viceroys here on Earth, which is *honour*; and *the bearing of an awful regard and behaviour towards them*, as to ſuch who can of right command and puniſh us, which is *reverence*.
2. A *readineſs*, and reſolved induſtry to maintain and ſupport them, in their *perſons* and *Government*, either
   1. By doing ſuch things towards it as are *in our own power*, viz.
      1. For the *maintenance of their grandeur*, in a willing payment of ſuch contributions as are appointed for it; which is *paying Tribute* and *Cuſtoms*.
      2. For the *preſervation* of their Lives or *Reigns*, by revealing to them ſuch Plots or Practices as make againſt them, and by endeavouring all that in us lyes, according to our *promiſes* and *obligations* of *allegiance*, to maintain and preſerve them; which is *fidelity* or *loyalty*.

2. For

2. For things that are *above our power*, by recommending them earneſtly to Almighty God, that he would beſtow them on them; which is *praying for them.*

3. A more direct owning of their Authority and Preſidence over us, by carrying ſuitably,
   1. To the things which they *command*, in *doing* or performing them; which is *obedience.*
   2. To the *penalties*, which upon our omiſſion or tranſgreſſion they impoſe, by a *quiet* ſuffering and reſting under them; which is *ſubjection.*

All theſe are effects of love to Kings and Princes, and ſo many particular Commands of God, and Inſtances of Duty in this relation.

And oppoſite to them, are all the contrary effects and prohibitions of *hatred* and *ill-will* towards them.

For from our averſeneſs to all good Offices, and our readineſs to create offence and evil to them, which are the natural effects of our hatred of them, will flow,

1. Our having undervaluing & leſſening thoughts of them in our *minds*, by looking *only*, or *chiefly* upon their failings and defects, and eſteeming them no better than common men; which is *diſhonour.* And if this be expreſſed in a *lightneſs* & *contemptuouſneſs* of behaviour towards them, which argues us to have no *fear* or *awe* of them, but to neglect and deſpiſe them; 'tis *irreverence.* Which, when it breaks out further into *re-reproachful Speeches*, and a diſcovery or inveighing againſt their defects, is, as S. *Jude* calls it, *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, Jude 8.

2. A *ſeeking* through our *envy* & *ill-will* to them, to *leſſen* or *deſtroy* their *Perſons* or *Power*; or at leaſt to withdraw all our own contributions towards the maintenance, and ſupport of them; by denying,

1. Such things as are in our *own power*,
   1. Towards the sustaining of their *splendor* and *grandeur*, in refusing to bear our share of the charge towards it, in *paying Taxes* and *Tribute*.
   2. Towards the preservation of their *Lives* and *Government*, in not helping and defending them, but either plotting, and endavouring our selves to give away their lives and Kingdoms unto others; or consenting to, and concealing them that do so, contrary to our obligations and promises of *allegiance*; which is *traiterousness*.
2. Such things as being *above our power*, might yet be obtained for them from God at our *request*; which is *neglecting to pray for them*.

3. A more *direct disowning*, and casting off their Power and Authority over us, by going cross,
   1. To their *Commands*, in omitting what they enjoin, or doing against it; which is *disobediente*.
   2. To their *inflictions* and *penalties*, by not submitting and subjecting our selves to them, but violently resisting and opposing them; which is called by S. *Paul resisting of power*, or *f standing up against it*, Rom. 13. 2. And this, when it is made by great Numbers, and goes on to extremities, when men are, as the Apostle there says, *g* set in *array* and posture of defence against it, and ready by force of Arms to contend and wage War with it; is *Rebellion*.

f ἀνθεστηκόσες τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ.

g ἀντιπαρατάμενοι τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ.

And all these are effects of *hatred* to Princes, and instances of disobedience in this relation.

So that as to this part of our Duty, our relation of *Subjects* towards our Sovereign *Kings* and *Princes*, the effects of *Love* or *Laws commanding*, are the Law of

honour

honour to Kings, of *reverence*, of *paying tribute and customs*, of *fidelity*, of *praying for them*, of *obedience*, of *subjection.*

And oppoſite to them the effects of *hatred*, or *forbidding* Laws, are the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, againſt *refuſing Tribute and Taxes*, againſt *traiterouſneſs*, againſt *neglecting to pray for Kings*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *reſiſting lawful Powers and Authority*, againſt *rebellion.*

And then,

2. For the other ſort of *publick Governours*, *viz.* thoſe of the *Church*, as are *Biſhops* and *other Miniſters*, the effects of *Love* in *ſhewing all kindneſs*, and *keeping back from all evil and offence* towards them, will be as follows.

1. A good and awful *opinion* of them, and of their Office in our *minds*; looking on them as men that bear the *great Character* of *Ambaſſadours from Chriſt*, as S. *Paul* calls them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20; and are commiſſioned by God to treat with us in a matter of *incomparably* the higheſt concernment, *viz. our eternal ſalvation*: and this is *honour*, or *eſteeming them highly in love*, though not for their *perſonal worth*, yet *for their works ſake*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 13. Which *honour* is expreſſed,
   1. By ſuch an *awfulneſs* of behaviour, and *reſpectful*, *loving* carriage towards them, as argues in us a juſt ſenſe of the *Greatneſs* and *Majeſty* of *Chriſt* whom they repreſent, and of the *goodneſs* of that *Concern* which they come about; which is *reverence.*
   2. By making ſuch *outward proviſions* for them, as may at leaſt ſet them *above*, and ſecure them from *contempt*, although it keep them *below envy*; and that is the *honour of maintenance*, whereof S. *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. And as

for those things which are not in our power to conferr upon them, by recommending them to Gods bounty, in *praying for them.*

2. As to our *Lives*, a careful heed and observance of those things, which, as the Ministers of *Christ*, and in *his Name*, they *teach* and *enjoin* us; which is *obedience.*

So that in our love to our *spiritual Rulers*, the *Bishops* and *Ministers* of Christs Church, are implied all these *particular* effects, which are so many *commanding* Laws, *viz.* the Law of *honour*, or *having them highly in esteem for their works sake*, of *reverence*, of *maintenance*, of *praying for them*, of *obedience.*

And opposite to all these are the effects of *hatred*, or doing nothing towards them that may *benefit* and *please*, but all things that may any way *vex* and *offend* them. In particular,

1. In our *minds*, a *low* and *disparaging opinion of them*, looking on them as persons of no worth or value, and setting at nought both them and their Office; which is *dishonour*, or *setting them at nought for their works sake.* And this is outwardly expressed,
   1. In *words*, by *vilifying* and undervaluing them either in picking up, and proclaiming their faults and failings to reproach their *Persons*, or in talking to disparage and debase their *Office*; which is *speaking evil of Ministers.* And if this be in smart jests and opprobrious mirth, to render them and their Calling *ridiculous*, 'tis *mocking* them.
   2. In *contemptuous* & *sleightful behaviour* towards them, thereby shewing that we have no regard or value for them, which is *irreverence.*
   3. In denying them all *outward maintenance*, such as

as ſhould preſerve them from meanneſs and contempt; which is *not providing for them.* And if this be inſtanced in taking away from them, either by *force* or *fraud*, thoſe *juſt Dues* of Tythes, *&c.* which our *Country Laws* have confirmed to them; it is *ſtealing of conſecrated things*, or *ſacriledge*.

And as for thoſe things which muſt be derived to them by *Gods peculiar Bounty* and *Providence*, a neglect to ſeek them at Gods hands on their behalf; which is *not praying for them.*

2. In our *lives* and *actions*, a proud neglect, or rejecting of what they impoſe, and acting againſt thoſe things, which, in the name of *Chriſt*, and as his Meſſengers, they enjoin us; which is *diſobedience*.

So that in our *hatred* of *publick Rulers in the Church*, the *Biſhops* and *Miniſters of Chriſt*, are implied all theſe effects, which are ſo many particular *forbidden* ſins, *viz.* the Law againſt *diſhonour* or *ſetting at nought our Biſhops and Miniſters, eſpecially for their works ſake*, againſt *ſpeaking evil of them*, againſt *mocking them*, againſt *irreverence to them*, againſt *not providing for them*, againſt *ſacriledge* or *ſtealing from them*, againſt *not praying for them*, againſt *diſobedience*.

And theſe are the ſeveral effects of *love* and *hatred*, and the particular *commanding* and *forbidding* Laws, which God has given us for the meaſure of our more eſpecial Duties to this firſt ſort of *Neighbours*, our *publick Governours* both in *Church* and *State*. And,

2. As for the other ſort of *relation*, which founds ſome *ſpecial Duties*, diſtinct from thoſe which we owe to all mankind in common, *viz* that which is more *private* and *domeſtick*; in as much as a *Family* is compounded of ſeveral ſtates and conditions of people, whereof

ſome

some are *Parents*, some *Children*, some *Masters*, and some *Servants*, it includes in it these four,

1. That of *Husband* and *Wife*.
2. That of *Parents* and *Children*.
3. That of *Brethren* and *Sisters*.
4. That of *Masters* and *Servants*.

1. The first and principal *domestick relation*, wherein Love has some peculiar effects that bind us then particularly when we are in that condition, is the relation betwixt *Husband* and *Wife*. And here *Love*, through its forwardness to delight and benefit, and its great averseness in any thing to give offence, will have these effects.

1. Such as are *mutual* and common to them both; as are,
   1. A most *tender care* & *heightned kindness*, arising from the most *intimate union* & *nearness* that is betwixt them; which expresses it self chiefly,
      1. In the *partaking* in each others bliss and misery, or being *both equally concerned* in those things, which befall *either*; which is *communicating in each others condition*.
      2. In the *bearing with each others infirmities*, and not falling into hard thoughts and estrangedness upon them.
      3. For those things which are not in their power to bestow, in seeking them mutually on each others behalf from God by *prayer*.
   2. A faithful performance of that appropriate use of each others Bed, which they promised mutually at marriage; and this is *fidelity*. Which must include, both their not admitting others into it, and not separating and shutting out each other from it, which S. *Paul* calls *rendring due Benevolence*, 1 Cor. 7. 3. to their Lives end.

2. Such

2. Such as are particular, and concern them in *special*, one towards the other; either,

1. The *Husband* toward the *Wife*.

And becauſe the relation of a *Husband* implies *power* and *dominion*, that theſe may be rendred as eaſie and grateful as may be, the effect of Love here will be ſuch a *tempering* and *ſweetning* of them, as makes them contribute as much as may be to her pleaſure and contentment; which it doth by making him,

1. When it is *for her benefit, to employ all his power & authority to procure her neceſſaries, & due conveniencies*; which is *providing for her*, or *giving honor*, i. e. * *maintenance to her*, becauſe She *is the weaker Veſſel*, as S. *Peter* ſays, & ſo unable to provide it for her ſelf, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7; & alſo *to guard off all inconvenience, and injury from her*; which is *protection of her*. * τιμὴν.

2. When 'tis *over her* as his *Subject*, to *lay them in great meaſure aſide*, & to win her rather by the *ſweetneſs of love*, than by the *force of authority*; wch is *flexible*, *winning Government*. And this, as it cauſes him to yield to her in ſeveral things, wch in ſtrictneſs of power he might ſtand upō, is *compliance* & *condeſcenſion*.

2. The *Wife* towards the *Husband*.

And the relation of a Wife implying ſubjection and dependance, the effects of *Love*, which doth nothing that *affronts* or *injures*, but all things that may any ways *pleaſure* and *delight*, will be,

1. An *opinion* of his *preheminence* and *authority* over her, which is *honour*. And this, as 'tis joyned with a *fear* of offending him, that expreſſes it ſelf in *reſpectful carriage*; is *reverence*.

2. A *free* and *forward* dispatch of all such things, as she knows he either *likes*, or *requires*; which is *observance* and *obedience*.
3. In *undergoing restraint*, a cheerful submission of her self to his pleasure; which is *subjection*.

So that in this relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, the effects of *Love* or Laws *commanding*, are, on *both* sides, the Law of *mutual concern and communicating in each others bliss or misery*, of *bearing each others infirmities*, of *prayer*, of *fidelity*, of *rendring due Benevolence*: On the *Husbands* towards his *Wife*, the Law of *providing for her*, of *protecting her*, of *flexible*, *winning Government*, of *compliance and condescension*: On the *Wives* toward her *Husband*, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *observance* and *obedience*, of *subjection*.

And opposite to these the effects of *ill-will* and hatred in this relation, will be as follows:

1. Such as are *mutual* & common unto both; as are,
   1. An *unaffectedness* in each others condition, and an insensibleness in *one part* of those things which befall the *other*; which is *unconcernedness in each others condition*.
   2. A not *bearing each others infirmities*, but either cutting out work & exercise for them, by doing or speaking such things as are fit to irritate; which is *provocation*: Or being ill-affected towards each other upon them; which, as it is expressed in a *privation* of all that tenderness of love and kindness, which should result from the intimate nearness of their relation is *strangedness*: and as proceeding higher to *ill-will*, & expressions of an imbittered mind, as it causes for the present wrangling and debate, it is *strife* or *contention*: & as festering into an habitual displeasure, & lasting regret, it is *hatred* or *enmity*;

enmity; and as breaking out in a proclamation of each others weakneſſes, *evil ſpeaking*, or *publiſhing each others infirmities*.

3. As doing no good to each other themſelves, ſo ſeeking none from God, which is *not praying for each other*.

4. An avoidance of each others Bed, which S. *Paul* calls *defrauding one another*, and *Denying Due Benevolence*, 1 Cor. 7.3,5; and being Falſe to the Marriage Covenant, by admitting others into it, which is *adultery*. But if this unfaithfulneſs *really be not*, but through the ſuſpicious temper of one ſide is only *groundeleſly preſumed*; it is *jealouſie*.

2. Such as are *peculiar*, and concern one particularly towards the other, either,

1. The *Husband* towards the *Wife*, and here the effects of *hatred* will be,

1. A *neglecting* to uſe his power *for her benefit*, through an inſenſibleneſs of her wants, and regardleſneſs of what hardſhips ſhe ſtruggles with; either as to *neceſſaraies* or *conveniencies*, which is *not providing for her*, or *not maintaining her*; or as to *injuries* and *affronts*, which is *not protecting her*.

2. *Uſing* all his authority *over her* by a *harſh* and *magiſterial peremptorineſs* of *Command*, which is *imperiouſneſs*; or by an *unyielding*, *inflexibleneſs* of *will* and *pleaſure*, which is *uncompliance*, *uncondeſcenſion*.

2. The *Wife* towards the *Husband*; where it will produce a light, and low opinion of him, which is *diſhonour*; which being joined with a contemptuous and fearleſs behaviour towards him, is *irreverence*. And this will effect,

1. A backwardness and utter averseness to do *unbidden* what will delight and please him, which is *non-observance*; or what is commanded by him, which is *disobedience*.
2. A refusal or open reluctance in undergoing that restraint which he imposes; which is *casting off his yoke*, or *unsubjection*.

So that in this relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, the effects of *hatred*, or Laws *forbidding*, are, to *both* Parties, the Law against *unconcernedness in each others condition*, against *not bearing each others infirmities*, against *provoking one another*, against *estrangedness*, against *strife* and *contention*, against *hatred* and *enmity*, against *publishing each others infirmities*, against *not praying for each other*, against *defrauding one another*, or *denying due Benevolence*, against *adultery*, against *jealousie*. To the *Husband* towards the *Wife*, the Law against *not maintaining her*, against *not protecting her*, against *imperiousness*, against *uncompliance* or *uncondescension*. To the *Wife* towards her *Husband*, the Law against *dishonour*, against *irreverence*, against *unobservance*, against *disobedience*, against *casting off his yoke*, or *unsubjection*.

2. The second *domestick* relation is that of *Parents* and *Children*, and in this the effects of *Love*, and particulars of *Duty* are either,

1. On the Parents side towards their Children, as are,
   1. From the *extraordinary nearness that their Children have to them*, being parts even of their own Bodies, that *most heightened tenderness* and kindness, which, because it is found in all Animals in *nature* towards their own Off-spring; is called *natural affection*.
   2. From their Childrens *helplessness* and wants, their *care over them*. Which is taken up,

1. With

1. With reſpect to *this world*, and that in behalf,
   1. Of their *Bodies*, by *providing* for them all due *neceſſaries* and *conveniencies*, both whilſt they are under them, and againſt the time that they go *out* from them; which is *proviſion*, *maintenance*.
   2. Of their *whole perſons* both Body and Soul, by *training* them up in the beſt ways they can, whereby to render them profitable in their ſtation, and uſeful Members of Society; which is *good* and *honeſt education*. In the management whereof, the uſing of their power over them, not in a *rigorous* and *auſtere*, but a *tender obliging way*; is *loving* Government.
2. With reſpect to the *next world*, & that is by cauſing them to be duly inſtructed in *Religion*, & ſtamped with *vertuous impreſſions*; which S. *Paul* calls *bringing them up in the nurture & admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4.

And, as for thoſe things, wch they cannot procure for them by themſelves; *begging* of them from Gods bounty by *prayer for them*.

2. On the *Childrens* ſide towards their *Parents*, where, beſides the Duty of *natural affection* common to them with the Parents, *Love* effects,
   1. An *opinion* of their *prehéminence* and *authority over them*, which is *honour*: and this, when it is joined with an *awful regard* to them, and a *fear* of offending them; is *reverence*.
   2. Whilſt they are *under* them, a *ready chearfulneſs* in *performing* all that they *command*, which is *obedience*; & in *bearing* & undergoing all that they *impoſe*, which is *ſubmiſſion* or *ſubjection*.

3. When either they are *under* them, or gone *from* them, a *readiness* upon occasion to requite all their *care* and *kindness*, in *supporting* and relieving them; which the Apostle calls *requiting their Parents*, 1 Tim. 5.4.
4. And in such things wherewith they cannot supply them of themselves, *entreating* God on their behalf; which is *praying for them*.

So that the effects of *Love* and instances of *Duty* in this relation, are from the *Parents* towards their *Children*, the Law of *natural affection*, of *maintenance* & *provision*, of *honest education*, of *loving Government*, of *bringing them up in the institution and fear of God*, of *prayer for them*: from the *Children* towards their *Parents*, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *obedience*, of *subjection*, of *requiting* upon occasion *their care and kindness*, of *prayer for them*.

And opposite to these effects of *Love* which are so many *commanded Duties*, the effects of *hatred* in this relation, which are so many particular *forbidden* sins, are these that follow:

1. In *Parents* towards their *Children*, it will produce a *coldness of heart* & *unconcernedness* for them wch is *being void of natural affection*: Which will effect,
   1. As to their *care* for them, a neglecting to provide for their present maintenance, or future support; which is condemned by S. *Paul* under the name of *not providing for those of our own*, 1 *Tim.* 5.8.
   2. As to their *Government* and *Conduct* of them, an untoward exercise and employment of it where there is no *just* need, or a neglect of it where there is. For it will produce,
      1. As to the things that are *good* and *necessary* for the *Children*, an utter *carelessness* of *them*, when the Parents *neglect* to teach and inure them

them to ſuch things as may render them *dutiful* to God, and *uſeful* in Society; and contrariwiſe accuſtom and bring them up in *idleneſs*, *vanity*, or *wickedneſs*; which is *irreligious* or *evil education*.

2. As to things that are *unneceſſary* and *indifferent*, a *great ſtrictneſs* and *ſeverity*, whether it be in *commanding* or *impoſing* things *without reaſon*, *neceſſity*, or *convenience*; or *convenient* things with *imperious harſhneſs* or *unreaſonable rigour*, only out of wantonneſs of authority and plenitude of power, which inſtead of exciting them to a *cheerful obedience*, is apt to move in them an *irkſom regret*; which is *provoking them to anger*.

3. And inſtead of praying for them, *not praying* at all, or uſing paſſionate and modiſh curſes or imprecations; which is *imprecating* or *praying againſt them*.

2. In *Children* towards their *Parents*, it will cauſe, beſides the want of *natural affection*,

1. A *low eſteem*, and undervaluing opinion of them in their minds; which is *diſhonour*. And this, if it be joined with a *contemptuous diſregard*, and *fearleſs behaviour* towards them; is *irreverence*: Which is expreſſed,

1. In *diſowning*, or *diſregarding* them by reaſon of their meanneſs; wch is *being aſhamed of them*.

2. In *entertaining* their *weakneſſes* and infirmities, not with pity and ſorrow, but with *ſport* and *delight*, turning them into a matter of mirth and laughter. This is a mixture of *hatred* and *ſcorn*, and is *mocking them*.

3. In *divulging* in words, and, inſtead of *concealing* & *excuſing*, *publiſhing* their faults & defects

defects with reproaching of them, and inveighing againſt them upon the account of them; which is malediction, or *curſing of them.*

2. Whilſt they are under them, a *ſpiting* and going *croſs*,
   1. To their *Commands*, by *not performing* what they require, but doing againſt it; which is *diſobedience.*
   2. To their *impoſitions*, by not ſubmitting to that *reſtraint* and *burthen* which they *lay* upon them; which is *contumaciouſneſs*, or *caſting off ſubjection.*
   3. To their *intereſt*, by embezelling or *ſecret waſting* of their ſubſtance; *which is robbing them.*
3. When either they are *under* them, or gone *from* them, not recompencing their *care & kindneſs*, by their *relief* and *ſervice*, when their Parents need requires it; which is *not requiting them.*
4. And inſtead of *praying* for them, *not praying* at all, or haſty wiſhing ill to them; which is *imprecation.*

So that the effects of *hatred* in this relation, or *forbidding* Laws are, to the *Parents*, the Law againſt *want of natural affection*, againſt *not providing for thoſe of their own houſe*, againſt *irreligious* and *evil education*, againſt *provoking their Children to anger*, againſt *not praying for them*, and *imprecation of them.* To the *Children*, beſides that againſt *want of natural affection*, the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *being aſhamed of their Parents*, againſt *mocking them*, againſt *curſing* or *reproach*, and *ſpeaking evil of them*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *contumaciouſneſs*, againſt *robbing them*, againſt *not praying for them*, or *imprecation of them.*

3. The

3. The third ſort of domeſtick relation, which includes ſome inſtances of *Love* that are not due *towards all men indifferently*, but peculiarly *towards ſome*; is the relation of *Brethren* and *Siſters*.

And theſe being ſo *nearly allied*, and partaking of the *ſame blood*; *Love* betwixt them will exert it ſelf,

1. In a moſt *paſſionate concern* and tender affection for each other; which, becauſe we ſeem to be carried on to it by the very force and inſtinct of our nature, without any *help of reaſon*, or *need of being* argued up to it, is called *natural affection*.
2. And as an effect of this, a helping each other by a *reciprocal ſervice*, and, when occaſion requires, by *communicating mutually of their ſubſtance*; which S. *Paul* calls a *providing for thoſe of our own Family*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. And in thoſe things which they cannot afford themſelves, ſeeking them mutually for each other by *prayer*.

And oppoſite to theſe are the effects of *hatred* betwixt them, which will effect,

1. An *unconcernedneſs* for each other, or a *want of natural affection*.
2. A *not helping* of each others needs, or *not providing for them*: and *not praying* to God in each others behalf, but making ill wiſhes mutually; which is *imprecation*.

So that the effects of *Love* or *commanding* Laws in this relation, are the Law of *natural affection*, of *providing for our Brethren*, of *praying for them*: and oppoſite to them the effects of *hatred* or *forbidding* Laws, are the Law againſt want of *natural affection*, againſt *not providing for our Brethren*, againſt *not praying for them*, and *imprecation* or *praying againſt them*.

4. The fourth and laſt relation, is that of *Maſters* and

and *Servants*. And in this the effects of Love are either,

1. From the *Masters* to the *Servants*. Where *Love* will produce,
   1. A *care* of their *Servants*, as of Members of their own Families; both,
      1. Of their *Bodies*, in provision and *maintenance*.
      2. Of their Souls, in *religious instruction* and *admonition*.
   2. A *Government* of them that is not *harsh* and *severe*, but *kind* and *gentle*, such as we expect and desire that God, who is our *Master*, should use over us; which therefore is called by the Apostle our *dealing justly and equally with them*, *i. e.* so as we would have our Master to deal with us, *Col.* 4. 1. In particular observing,
      1. In our *Commands* to them, *Mercy* as well as *Justice*; in requiring *nothing that God forbids*, which is *unlawful*; *nothing for imperiousness and commands sake*, only that we may create them work though we our selves receive no benefit; which is *unprofitable*: & even where we are *advantaged* by it, *nothing* lastly *which is* either *above*, or at least *very hard and oppressive to their power and strength*; which is *unproportionable*. And this is *kindness* and *equity in commanding*.
      2. In our *threatnings* and *punishments*, *tenderness* and *pity*; in not threatning and punishing out of *will* and *power*, or either *more* or *oftner* than *need* requires, which the Apostle calls *forbearing*, or *moderating threatning*, Ephes. 6. 9.
      3. In our *rewards*, paying them punctually and justly

juſtly what they have wrought for; wch is *punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling.*

4. And beſides all the kindneſs which we can do for them *our ſelves*, whether by rewarding or promoting them, *procuring* moreover all the good which we can for them at Gods hands, by *praying for them.*

2. From the *Servants* to the *Maſters.*

And the *nature of ſervice* being a *ſetting over all our powers* and abilities for the time, *to their benefit whom we are to ſerve*; the effects of *Love* in this relation will be,

1. An *opinion*, and eſteem in the mind of their *Maſters preheminence* and *lordſhip* over them; which is *honour.* And this being joined with an *awfulneſs* and fear of offending him, who has both Authority to *command*, and Power to *puniſh*; is *reverence.*

2. In things which they know he *deſires* and *delights in*, a forward care and ready induſtry to pleaſe him, by doing them before they are *bidden*; which is *obſervance.* And this among other things effects,

1. As for *his*, or *his Families* defects at *home*, *concealing* or *excuſing them.*

2. As for his reputation *abroad*, when 'tis injured, *vindicating* and *defending* it.

3. A care of their Maſters Goods, and carrying ſuitably to his pleaſure; always exerciſing,

1. In thoſe things which their Maſter *intruſts* them with, a *true diſcharge* of that truſt, and the things committed to it; which is *fidelity.*

2. In thoſe things wch their Maſter *commands*, a ready *performance* and execution of them; which is *obedience.* The *vigorous application*

of themselves to the dispatch whereof is *diligence*. Which they are to shew, not only from the terrour of their Master, so long as his eye is over them, which the Apostle calls *eye-service*; but from the ready *willingness* of their *own minds*, which will make them do it whether he be with them, or absent from them; which in the same place is called *obeying with good will* and *from the heart*, Ephes. 6. 6, 7.

3. In those things which he *imposes* and *inflicts*, whether they be *just*, or even *unjust*, if light and *tolerable*, a *quiet* and *uncontending submission*; which is *patience* and subjection.

4. And in those things wherein they cannot advantage him themselves, commending him to Almighty God, by *prayer for him*.

So that the effects of *Love* or *commanding* Laws in this relation, are, on the *Masters* side, the Law of *maintenance*, of *religious instruction*, of a *just and equal Government of them*, of *kindness and equity in commanding*, of *forbearance and moderation in threatning*, of *punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling*, of praying for them: On the *Servants*, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *observance*, of *concealing and excusing their Masters defects*, of *vindicating their injured reputation*, of *fidelity*, of *obedience*, of *diligence*, of *willing and hearty service*, of *patient submission and subjection*, of *praying for them*.

And opposite to these are all the effects of *hatred*, which will be instanced in these Particulars.

1. From the *Masters* towards their *Servants*, it will produce,
   1. A *carelesness* of what becomes of their *Servants*, whether as to,
      1. Their *Bodies*, in not duly *maintaining* or *providing for them*.
      2. Their

2. Their *Souls*, in *not catechising* or *inſtructing of them.*

2. A Government of them which is *cruel* and *rigorous*: and this being a dealing otherwiſe with them than we are willing to be dealt with our ſelves; is *unequal Government.* Which is expreſſed,

1. In the *injuſtice* and *ſeverity* of our Commands, when we enjoin *what God forbids*, which is *unlawful*; or *what tends not to benefit our ſelves, but only to vex and trouble them*; which is *unprofitable*: or what is either *above their ſtrength, or exceeding hard for it*; which is *unproportionable*: And this is *unjuſtneſs*, and *wantonneſs*, and *rigour in commanding*: which, if it be acted in a *contemptuous haughtineſs*, and *peremptory way*; is *imperiouſneſs.*

2. In the *injuſtice* and *hardſhip* of our *threatnings* and *puniſhments*, when we uſe them *without occaſion*, or *more* than needs when there is *occaſion for them*; which is *immoderate threatning*, or *puniſhing.* And this, as it vents it ſelf in *bitter words*, and vehemence of vilifying expreſſions, a fault that is incident to *proud, haſty* Folk, and *lordly Maſters*, is *railing at them.*

3. In the diſhoneſty and dilatorineſs of our *Rewards*, when we either *pay not at all* that which was covenanted for their ſervice, or cut it *ſhort*, or *delay it long* when their neceſſity calls for it inſtantly; which is *defrauding* or *keeping back the wages of the Hireling.*

3. And beſides all the kindneſs which we deny them our ſelves, neglecting to ſeek for any

thing for them at Gods hands, by *not praying for them*; or cursing and imprecating them, which is *praying against them.*

2. From the *Servants* towards their *Masters*, where the effects of *hatred* are,
   1. A *disesteem* and contemptuous opinion of their *Masters*, as persons of no *worth* or *preheminence* above themselves, which is *dishonour*. And this, when it is evidenced in a *careless* and disrespectful behaviour towards them, which argues them to stand in no *fear* or *awe* of them; is *irreverence.*
   2. An industrious neglect of such things, as they know are *pleasing* and *acceptable* to him; and venturing upon others, that will *disgust* and *offend* him; which is *non-observance*: two particular expressions whereof are,
      1. As to *his*, or *his families* defects at *home*; a *publishing* and aggravation of them.
      2. As to his *reputation abroad*, a suffering it to lye under imputations that are undeserved; which is *not vindicating him.*
   3. An endamagement of their Masters Goods, Concerns, and Authority, by shewing,
      1. In what their Master *intrusts* them, *falseness* or non-performance; which is *unfaithfulness.*
         And if it be instanced in *making away* such *Goods* or *Money*, as were committed to them,
         1. To their own *luxury* and *pleasure*, by such ways as our Saviour sets down of *eating, drinking*, & *keeping ill company*, Mat. 24. 49; it is *wastefulness of their Masters Goods.*
         2. To their own *private profit*, and secret enrichment; it is *purloining.*

2. In

2. In what their Maſters *command*, a *careleſs omiſſion* of it, or *acting againſt* it; which is, *diſobedience*. Whether this be expreſſed,
   1. In *queſtioning* and *diſputing* the *fitneſs* and convenience of what they enjoin, inſtead of *doing* and *performing* it; which S. *Paul* calls *anſwering again*, or * *ſpeaking againſt and contradicting it*, Tit. 2. 9.
   2. In a *ſlow* and lazy application of themſelves to it, when they do ſet about it; which is *ſlothfulneſs*.
   3. In a laborious diſpatch of what they are commanded *only* whilſt their *Maſters eye* is *over* them, but ſlackning all again when he is *gone from* them; doing all things out of *dread*, but nothing out of *choice* and *good will*; which is *eye-ſervice*.
3. In what their Maſter *impoſes* or *inflicts*, a *not enduring* or reſting under it; which is *contumacy* or *reſiſtance*.
4. And in ſuch things as God is to beſtow on them, a not ſeeking to him by *prayer* on their behalf; but *praying againſt* them.

* ἀντιλέγοντε.

So that the effects of *ill will* and *hatred*, or Laws *forbidding* in this relation, are, on the Maſters ſide, the Law againſt *not providing maintenance for his Servant*, againſt *not catechizing or inſtructing him*, againſt *unequal Government*, againſt *unjuſtneſs, wantonneſs, and rigour in commanding*, againſt *imperiouſneſs*, againſt *immoderate threatning*, againſt *railing*, againſt *defrauding or keeping back the wages of the Hireling*, againſt *not praying for him*, and *imprecation* or *praying againſt him*: and on the Servants ſide the Law againſt *diſhonour of his Maſter*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *non-obſervance*, againſt *publiſhing or aggravating his Maſters faults*, againſt *not vindicating*

dicating his injured reputation, againſt *unfaithfulneſs*, againſt *waſting his Goods*, againſt *purloining*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *anſwering again*, againſt *ſlothfulneſs*, againſt *eye-ſervice*, againſt *contumacy* or *reſiſtance*, againſt *not praying for them*, and *imprecation* or *praying againſt them*.

And thus we have ſeen what are the particular effects of love and hatred, both towards *all men in general*, and alſo towards *all in thoſe ſeveral relations*, wherein we ſtand concerned with one another in the World. And in them are contained all the particular Commands and Prohibitions, which make up this third Branch of Duty, *viz. righteouſneſs*, or our Duty towards our *Neighbour*. All that God requires of us towards other men, is only to have a *hearty kindneſs* for them, and in this manner to expreſs it. And all that he forbids is only our *hatred* of them, with all the forementioned effects of it. So that in the above-named inſtances and effects of *Love*, in *Juſtice*, *Charity*, *Peace*, with thoſe others in the relations now recited, is comprized the whole of this laſt Member of S. *Paul*'s Diviſion, *righteouſneſs*.

Thus at laſt we have ſeen what are all the *particular* inſtances of thoſe three *general* Laws, *ſobriety*, *piety*, and *righteouſneſs*; wherein, if we add two or three more, is comprized the Body of our whole Duty.

If we add *two* or *three* more, I ſay; for beſides the ſeveral Laws already mentioned, there are three particular Duties yet remaining, two whereof are of a more *poſitive* and *arbitrary* nature, which Chriſt has bound all Chriſtians to obſerve; and they are the Law of *Baptiſm*, of the *Lords Supper*, and of *Repentance*.

Baptiſm is our *incorporation into the Church of Chriſt*; or our *entrance into the Goſpel Covenant*, or *into all the duties and priviledges of Chriſtians*, *by means of the outward Ceremony of waſhing or ſprinkling in the name of the Father*,

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

The *Euchariſt* or *Lords Supper*, is our *Federal Vow*, or *repetition of that engagement which we made at Baptiſm, of performing faith, repentance and obedience unto God; in expectation of remiſſion of ſins, eternal happineſs, and thoſe other promiſes which by Chriſts death are procured for us upon theſe terms: which engagement we ſolemnly make to God at our eating Bread and drinking Wine, in remembrance and commemoration of Chriſts dying for us.*

Repentance is a *forſaking of ſin*, or *an amendment of any evil way upon a ſorrowful ſenſe, and juſt apprehenſion of its making us offend God, and ſubjecting us to the danger of death and damnation.*

And if to all the forementioned inſtances of thoſe *three grand* Vertues, which by the Apoſtle, *Tit.* 2. 12, 13, are made the ſumm of our Chriſtian Duty, we join theſe *three additional*, whereof the *two* firſt are *poſitive* Laws; we have all that whereby God will judge us at the laſt Day, even all thoſe *particular Laws* whereto our obedience is required as *neceſſary* to *ſalvation.*

And thus we have ſeen what thoſe particular Laws are, which the Goſpel indiſpenſably requires us to obey. They are no other than thoſe very inſtances, which I have been all this while recounting and deſcribing. But becauſe the Catalogue of them hitherto has been broken and interrupted, and therefore cannot be run over ſo eaſily, as might be deſired in a matter of that importance; I will here repeat them all again for the greater eaſe of all ſuch pious ſouls as deſire to try themſelves by them, and place them all in one view, and all together.

The commanding Laws then whereby at the laſt Day we muſt all be judged, are theſe that follow:

The Law of *ſobriety* towards our ſelves, with all its Train, which are the Law of *humility*, of *heavenly-mindedneſs*,

edneſs, of *temperance*, of *ſobriety*, of *chaſtity*, of *continence*, of *contempt of the world* and *contentment*, of *courage and taking up the Croſs*, of *diligence and watchfulneſs*, of *patience*, of *mortification* and *ſelf-denyal*.

The Law of *piety* towards God with all its Branches, which are the Law of *honour*, of *worſhip*, of *faith* and *knowledge*, of *love*, of *zeal*, of *truſt* and *dependance*, of *prayer*, of *thankfulneſs*, of *fear*, of *ſubmiſſion* and *reſignedneſs*, of *obedience*.

The Law of *Juſtice* towards men in all its parts, which will be ſeen by the contrary prohibitions of *injuſtice*.

The Law of *Charity* in all its inſtances; which are the Law of *goodneſs* or *kindneſs*, of *honour for our Brethrens Vertues*, of *pity* and *ſuccour*, of *reſtraining our Chriſtian Liberty for our weak Brothers edification*, of *friendly reproof*, of *brotherly kindneſs*, of *congratulation*, of *compaſſion*, of *alms and diſtribution*, of *covering and concealing their defects*, of *vindicating their reputation*, of *affability* or *graciouſneſs*, of *courteſie* and *officiouſneſs*, of *condeſcenſion*, of *hoſpitality*, of *gentleneſs*, of *candor*, of *unity*, of *thankfulneſs*, of *meekneſs* or *lenity*, of *placableneſs*, of *forgiving injuries*, of *doing good to enemies*, and, when nothing more is in our power, *praying for them*, and *bleſſing* or *ſpeaking what is good of them*, when we take occaſion to mention them, of *long-ſuffering*, of *mercifulneſs*.

The Law of *Peace* and *Concord* with all its Train; as are, the Law of *peaceableneſs*, of *condeſcenſion* and *compliance*, of *doing our own buſineſs*, of *ſatisfying for injuries*, of *peace-making*.

The Law of *love* to *Kings* and *Princes* in all its Particulars; which are, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *paying Tribute and Cuſtoms*, of *fidelity*, of *praying for them*, of *obedience*, of *ſubjection*.

The Law of *love* to our *Biſhops* and *Miniſters* with all

all its expreſſions; which are the Law of *honour*, or *having them highly in eſteem for their works ſake*, of *reverence*, of *manitenance*, of *praying for them*, of *obedience*.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Husband* and *Wife* with all its Branches; which are on *both* ſides, the Law of *mutual concern*, and *communicating in each others bliſs or miſery*, of *bearing each others infirmities*, of *prayer*, of *fidelity* of *rendring due benevolence*: On the *Husbands* towards his *Wife*, the Law of *providing for her*, of *protecting her*, of *flexible* and *winning Government*, of *compliance* and *condeſcenſion*: On the *Wives* towards her *Husband*, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *obſervance* and *obedience*, of *ſubjection*.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Parents* and *Children*, with its ſeveral effects; which are, from the *Parents* towards their *Children*, the Law of *natural affection*, of *maintenance and proviſion*, of *honeſt education*, of *loving Government*, of *bringing them up in the inſtitution and fear of God*, of *prayer for them*: From the Children towards their Parents, beſides the Duty of *natural affection* common to both, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *obedience*, of *ſubjection*, of *requiting* upon occaſion *their care and kindneſs*, of *prayer for them*.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Brethren* and *Siſters*, with all its inſtances; which are the Law of *natural affection*, of *providing for our Brethren*, of *praying for them*.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Maſter* and *Servant*, with its ſeveral expreſſions; which are, on the *Maſters* ſide, the Law of *maintenance*, of *religious inſtruction*, of a *juſt and equal Government of them*, of *kindneſs and equity in commanding*, of *forbearance* and *moderation in threatning*, of *punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling*, of *praying for them*: On

the *Servants*, the Law of *honour*, of *reverence*, of *obſervance*, of *concealing and excuſing their Maſters defects*, of *vindicating their injured reputation*, of *fidelity*, of *obedience*, of *diligence*, of *willing* and *hearty ſervice*, of *patient ſubmiſſion* and *ſubjection*, of *praying for them*.

To all which we may add the two *arbitrary inſtitutions* and *poſitive Laws* of the *Goſpel*, *Baptiſm*, and the *Euchariſt* or *Lords Supper*; and when we tranſgreſs in any of the inſtances forementioned, that great and only remedy of Chriſts Religion, the Law of *repentance*.

This, ſo far as I can call to mind at preſent, is a juſt enumeration of thoſe particular Injunctions and Commands of God, whereto our obedience is indiſpenſably required, and whereby at the laſt Day we muſt all be judged either to live or die eternally.

But ſuppoſing that ſome particular inſtances of Love and Duty are omitted in this Catalogue, yet need this be prejudicial to no mans happineſs, ſince that defect will be otherwiſe ſupplied. For, as for ſuch omitted inſtances, where there is an occaſion for them, and an opportunity offered to *exerciſe* them, mens *own reaſon* and *paſſion* will repreſent and ſuggeſt them for a *rule of obedience*; and when they *wilfully tranſgreſs* them, their own Conſcience muſt needs check and reprove them, which will be ſufficient to them for a *rule of trial*. For all the Laws of this *ſecond*, which is the *Goſpel-Covenant*, are ſo agreeably ſuited to our natural reaſon and conſcience, that every mans own mind may be a ſufficient Monitor. What our own underſtanding tells us is fit, and becoming us that we ſhould do; that has God bound upon us by his Laws, and made it our Duty to do. His Precepts are the very ſame with the beſt reſults, and pureſt dictates of our own reaſon; ſo that every pious and honeſt Conſcience cannot but of it ſelf approve all that God has enjoined it. Which God himſelf has

has clearly intimated, when he ſays of all the Laws of the *ſecond*, which is the *Goſpel-Covenant*, that he *will put* the *Laws* contained in it *into their minds, and write them in their hearts*; ſo that, in regard they have them ſo legible within themſelves, *they ſhall not* need to be ſtill enquiring of others, and to *teach every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother, ſaying Know the Lord*; and that in this, or that particular you muſt ſerve him; *for all ſhall know him* and his Laws, without any other Monitor than their own Conſcience, *from the leaſt to the greateſt*, Heb. 8.10,11.

Beſides, as for all the Laws of *piety* towards God, and of *righteouſneſs* towards men, which make up by far the greateſt part of our Duty; they are only ſo many ſeveral effects, and various expreſſions of our *Love* to them. So that he who acts nothing againſt love, breaks none of all theſe Laws, but keeps them every one. Whereof Chriſt himſelf (who has given theſe Laws, and who is to judge of our obedience to them) and his Apoſtle *Paul* have given us ſufficient aſſurance, when they both affirm of *Love*, that, as to theſe two general parts of Duty, it is *the fulfilling of the Law*. And therefore any man that knows what *Love* is, may quickly underſtand what is *Law*; and when he is about to venture upon any action, it is but asking his own ſoul whether it be *againſt Love*, and he has his Anſwer whether or no it be *againſt Duty*.

And ſince, whenſoever we have occaſion for it, we ſhall be admoniſhed of our Duty both theſe ways, both from our *reaſon*, and our *paſſion*; though this Catalogue prove defective in ſome inſtances, and omit it, that defect can be of no danger, ſeeing it will be otherwiſe ſupplied. We may by its help know thoſe Duties, which it mentions; and by the help of the other two, thoſe Particulars wherein it fails us. So that we

ſhall ſtill be ſufficiently *directed in our Duty*, and ſhewed what we ſhould *do*; and when we ſin againſt it wilfully, our own Conſcience is privy to it, which will enable us to examine alſo whether indeed we have *done* it, or no.

This then may ſuffice for a particular enumeration of all the *Commanding* Laws of God, whereto our obedience is required, as an indiſpenſable condition of our life and happineſs.

And as for all the *forbidding* Laws, which contain thoſe things, which under the higheſt pains of death and miſery we are indiſpenſably required to abſtain from; they are theſe that follow:

The Law againſt unſoberneſs towards our ſelves, with all its particulars; which are, the Law againſt *pride*, againſt *arrogance* or *oſtentation*, againſt *vain-glory*, againſt *ambition*, againſt *haughtineſs*, againſt *inſolence*, againſt *imperiouſneſs*, againſt *dogmaticalneſs*, againſt *envious backbiting*, againſt *emulation*, againſt *worldlineſs*, againſt *intemperance*, againſt *gluttony*, againſt *voluptuouſneſs*, againſt *drunkenneſs*, againſt *revelling*, againſt *incontinence*, againſt *laſciviouſneſs* or *wantonneſs*, againſt *filthineſs*, againſt *obſcene Jeſtings*, againſt *impurity* or *uncleanneſs*, againſt *ſodomy*, againſt *effeminateneſs*, againſt *adultery*, againſt *fornication*, againſt *whoredom*, againſt *inceſt*, againſt *rape*, againſt *covetouſneſs*, againſt *grudging* and *repining*, againſt *refuſing* or *being ſcandaled at the Croſs*, againſt *idleneſs* and *careleſneſs*, againſt *fearfulneſs* and *ſoftneſs*, againſt *ſelf-love*, againſt *carnality*, againſt *ſenſuality*.

The Law againſt *impiety* towards God, with all its Retinue; which are, the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *atheiſm*, againſt *denying Providence*, againſt *blaſphemy*, againſt *ſuperſtition*, againſt *idolatry*, againſt *witchcraft* and *ſorcery*, againſt *fooliſhneſs*, againſt *headineſs*, againſt

unbe-

unbelief, againſt *hating God*, againſt *want of zeal*, againſt *diſtruſt of him*, againſt *not praying to him*, againſt *unthankfulneſs*, againſt *fearleſneſs*, againſt *contumacy* or *repining* againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *common ſwearing*, againſt *perjury* againſt *prophaneneſs*.

The Law againſt *injuſtice* towards men, in all its inſtances; which are, the Law againſt *murder*, againſt *falſe witneſs*, againſt *ſlander* or *calumny*, againſt *lying*, againſt *unfaithfulneſs* or *perfidy*, againſt *adultery*, againſt *covetouſneſs*, againſt *ſtealing* or *robbing*, againſt *oppreſſion*, againſt *extortion* and *depreſſing in bargaining*, againſt *circumvention* and *deceit*, againſt *craftineſs*.

The Law againſt *uncharitableneſs* with all its Train; which are, the Law againſt *maliciouſneſs* or *hatefulneſs*, againſt *wickedneſs*, againſt *deſpiſing* and *hating them that are good*, againſt *giving ſcandal to weak Brethren*, againſt *envy* or *an evil eye*, againſt *rejoicing in evil*, againſt *uncharitableneſs in alms*, againſt *not vindicating an innocent mans reputation*, againſt *evil ſpeaking*, againſt *cenſorioufneſs*, againſt *back-biting*, againſt *whiſpering*, againſt *railing* or *reviling*, againſt *upbraiding*, againſt *reproaching*, againſt *mocking*, againſt *difficulty of acceſs*, againſt *contumely* or *affront*, againſt *uncourteouſneſs*, againſt *ſtiffneſs* or *uncondeſcenſion*, againſt *unhoſpitableneſs*, againſt *ſurlineſs*, againſt *malignity*, againſt *turbulence* and *unquietneſs*, againſt *unthankfulneſs*, againſt *anger* and *paſſionateneſs*, againſt *debate* and *variance*, againſt *bitterneſs*, againſt *clamour* and *brawling*, againſt *hatred* and *malice*, againſt *implacableneſs*, againſt *revenge*, againſt *curſing* and *reproaching enemies* and *imprecation of them*, againſt *haſtineſs to puniſh*, againſt *rigour*.

The Law againſt *enmity* and *diſcord*, with all its Dependants; which are, the Law againſt *unpeaceableneſs*, againſt *emulation or provoking one another*, againſt *pragmaticalneſs or being buſie Bodies*, againſt *tale-bearing*, a-

againſt

againſt *whiſpering*, againſt *not ſatisfying for injuries*, againſt *ſtrife* or *contention*, againſt *diviſion* and *faction* in the State, againſt *hereſie*, and againſt *ſchiſm* in the Church, againſt *tumult*.

The Law againſt *hatred* in the particular relation of *Subjects* towards their *Princes*, with the ſeveral effects of it; which are, the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, againſt *refuſing Tribute* and *Taxes*, againſt *traiterouſneſs*, againſt *neglecting to pray for Kings*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *reſiſting lawful Powers* and *Authority*, againſt *rebellion*.

The Law againſt hatred to our Eccleſiaſtical Governours, *Biſhops* and *Miniſters*, with all the particulars implied in it; which are the Law againſt *diſhonour of our Biſhops* and *Miniſters*, eſpecially againſt *ſetting them at nought for their works ſake*, againſt *irreverence to them*, againſt *ſpeaking evil of them*, againſt *mocking them*, againſt *not providing for them*, againſt *ſacriledge or ſtealing from them*, againſt *not praying for them*, againſt *diſobedience*

The Law againſt hatred in the relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, with all its Particulars; which are, on *both* ſides, the Law againſt *unconcernedneſs in each others condition*, againſt *not bearing each others infirmities*, againſt *provoking one another*, againſt *eſtrangedneſs*, againſt *ſtrife* or *contention*, againſt *hatred* and *enmity*, againſt *publiſhing each others infirmities*, againſt *not praying for each other*, againſt *defrauding one another*, or *denying due Benevolence*, againſt *adultery*, againſt *jealouſie*: On the *Husbands* towards the *Wife*, the Law againſt *not maintaing her*, againſt *not protecting her*, againſt *imperiouſneſs*, againſt *uncompliance* or *uncondeſcenſion*: On the *Wives* towards her *Husband*, the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *unobſervance*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *caſting off his yoke* or *unſubjection*.

The Law againſt *hatred* in the particular relation of *Parents*

Parents and *Children*, with all its Inſtances; which are on both ſides, the Law againſt *want of natural affection*, againſt *not praying for each other*, and *imprecation*: On the Parents ſide, the Law againſt *not providing for thoſe of their own houſe*, againſt *irreligious and evil education*, againſt *harſh Government* or *provoking their Children to anger*: On the Childrens, the Law againſt *diſhonour*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *being aſhamed of their Parents*, againſt *mocking them*, againſt *curſing* or *reproach* and *ſpeaking evil of them*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *contumaciouſneſs*, againſt *robbing them*.

The Law againſt *hatred* in the particular relation of *Brethren* and *Siſters*, with its effects; which are, the Law againſt *want of natural affection*, againſt *not providing for our Brethren*, againſt *not-praying for them*, againſt *imprecation* or *praying againſt them*.

The Law againſt *hatred* in the particular relation of Maſter and Servant, with all its expreſſions; which are, on the *Maſters* ſide, the Law againſt *not providing maintenance for his Servant*, againſt *not catechizing or inſtructing him*, againſt *unequal Government*, againſt *unjuſtneſs*, *wantonneſs*, and *rigour in commanding*, againſt *imperiouſneſs*, againſt *immoderate threatning*, againſt *railing at him*, againſt *defrauding* or *keeping back the wages of the Hireling*, againſt *not praying for him*, againſt *imprecation*: And on the *Servants*, the Law againſt *diſhonour of his Maſter*, againſt *irreverence*, againſt *non-obſervance*, againſt *publiſhing* or *aggravating his Maſters faults*, againſt *not vindicating his injured reputation*, againſt *unfaithfulneſs*, againſt *waſting his Goods*, againſt *purloining*, againſt *diſobedience*, againſt *anſwering again*, againſt *ſlothfulneſs*, againſt *eye-ſervice*, againſt *contumacy* and *reſiſtance*, againſt *not praying for him*, againſt *imprecation* or *praying againſt him*.

To all which we muſt add the two poſitive and arbitrary

bitrary prohibitions of the Gospel, the Law against *neglecting Baptism*, and *the Lords Supper*. And when we wilfully transgress any one, or more of the Commands foregoing, a perseverance in it without amending it; which is *impenitence*.

And these are those particular prohibitions, whereto our obedience is indispensably required by the Gospel, and whereby at the last Day we must all be judged.

And for the performance of all these *Commands*, and keeping back from all these prohibitions, when it is become any mans habitual course and practice; it is oftimes expressed by the general word *holiness*, as the contrary is by *unholiness*.

CHAP. V.

Of the Sanction of the foregoing Laws.

The Contents.

Of the Sanction of all the forementioned particular Laws. That they are bound upon us by our hopes of Heaven, and our fears of Hell. Of the Sanction of all the particular affirmative or commanding Laws.

NOW it is upon our obedience of all those Laws, which are mentioned in the foregoing Chapters, that all our well-grounded hope of pardon, and a happy Sentence at the last Day depends. They are that Rule which God has fixt for the Proceedings at that Judgment, whereby all of us will be doomed to live or die eternally. There is not any one of them left naked and

and unguarded, for men to tranſgreſs at pleaſure, and yet to go unpuniſhed: but the performance of every one is made neceſſary unto life, and the unrepented tranſgreſſion of it threatned with eternal damnation.

And that it is ſo, is plain from this, becauſe almoſt the whole Body of them, *viz.* all thoſe which are implyed in *piety towards God*, and in *Juſtice*, *Charity*, and *peaceableneſs towards men*, are nothing elſe but inſtances and effects of *Love*, which is plainly neceſſary, and that in the *greateſt latitude*. For the words of the Command are as comprehenſive as can be. That thou mayeſt *inherit eternal life*, *thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, *and with all thy ſoul*, *and with all thy ſtrength*, *and with all thy mind*; which plainly take in our whole affection towards God, and every part and expreſſion of it: *and* thou ſhalt love *thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, which again implies all inſtances of love towards other men, ſeeing towards our own ſelves not any one is wanting: *This do*, *and thou ſhalt live*, Luke 10.25,27,28. So that, in ſhewing of them all that they are *natural effects* of an *univerſal love*, I have ſhewn withal that they are *neceſſary means* of *life*, and *conditions* of *ſalvation*.

This is a plain mark, whereby it is obvious and eaſie for us all to underſtand what Laws are neceſſary terms of life. For every mans heart can inform him what are the *natural effects of love*, they being ſuch things as the meaneſt reaſon may diſcern, nay ſuch as every mans affection will ſuggeſt to him. And becauſe they are ſo, the Apoſtles themſelves, when they ſet down Catalogues of indiſpenſable Laws, never deſcend to reckon up all particulars; but having plainly declared the abſolute neceſſity of an *ample* and *univerſal love* in the *general*, they content themſelves with naming ſome few inſtances of it, and leave the reſt, which are like unto them, to be ſuggeſted to us by our own minds. And the ſame

courſe they take in recounting thoſe ſins, which are oppoſite to them, and which, without repentance, will certainly deſtroy us. Thus, for inſtance, in S. *Paul*'s Catalogue of damning ſins, *Gal.* 5. he doth not trouble himſelf to name all particulars, but having mentioned *ſeveral* of them, he concludes with this *general* intimation of the reſt—*and ſuch like*, v. 21.

This way then of ſhewing the neceſſity of all the forementioned Laws, by ſhewing expreſly that Love in the general is plainly neceſſary, and leaving it to mens own minds to collect of them all ſeverally that they are natural effects of it; is ſufficient in it ſelf, and ſuch as the Apoſtles of our Lord are wont to take up with. But becauſe our belief of the neceſſity of our obedience in all the preceding particulars is of ſo great moment, and it is ſo infinitely our concern to be fixt and ſettled in it; I will here ſet down ſuch expreſs declarations of it in every one of them, as are to be met with in the Scriptures.

And to begin with the ſeveral *Claſſes* of them in the ſame order, wherein they are laid down; for *ſobriety*, and all the particular Laws comprehended under it, we have their ſanction ſet down, and the neceſſity of our obedience to them to our life and pardon expreſſed in the following Scriptures.

For the Law of *humility* and *lowlineſs* of mind, take theſe:

Humility. *Put on as* neceſſary qualifications of *the elect of God, holy and beloved, humbleneſs of mind*, Col. 3. 12. It is this poverty and lowlineſs of Spirit which muſt prepare us for eternal happineſs. *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit*, Mat. 5. 3. For, as our Saviour ſays, 'tis by *learning of him who is meek and lowly, that we ſhall find* both here and hereafter *reſt to our ſouls*, Mat. 11. 29.

And for all the reſt, their Sanction is expreſſed in theſe enſuing places. *Labour*

Labour not for the meat that periſheth but for that which endureth to everlaſting life, Joh. 6. 27. This is a neceſſary evidence of our being riſen with Chriſt now at preſent; *If ye be riſen with Chriſt ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth*, Col. 3. 1, 2; and a neceſſary condition to our being bleſſed with him for ever hereafter, the bleſſedneſs which our Saviour pronounces, being to thoſe *which hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs*, Mat. 5. 6. Heavenly mindedneſs.

Add to temperance patience, for he that lacketh theſe is blind, and ſhall not be looked on as a new man, ſeeing he *has forgot that* he was purged from his old ſins, 2 *Pet.* 1. 6, 9. *The fruit of the Spirit*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *is temperance* or * continence, and it is *againſt* this, among others, *that there is no Law* to condemn it, *Gal.* 5. 23. And to the Hebrews he ſays, that *they have need of patience to inherit the promiſes* of life and happineſs, *Heb.* 10. 36; and therefore they muſt *not caſt away*, but hold faſt their *confidence*, or couragious and † open owning even of a ſuffering Religion, *which hath great recompence of reward*; v. 35. It being to them only *who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory and immortality, that God will give eternal life*, Rom. 2. 7. Temperance. Patience. Continence. * ἐγκράτεια. † παῤῥησίαν.

Dearly Beloved, I beſeech you as Strangers and Pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which war againſt the ſoul, to vanquiſh and deſtroy it, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. This abſtinence is one chief thing, which we were called to at our Call to Chriſtianity. *God hath not called us to uncleanneſs*, ſaith *S. Paul*, *but unto holineſs*, or * purity and cleanneſs. *For this is the will of God* which you are firſt to perform before you expect his reward, *your* purity or *ſanctification*, and particularly in one inſtance, wherein you are ſo generally defective, *that you abſtain from fornication, and every one of you poſſeſs his Veſſel* or Body Chaſtity. * ἐν ἁγιασμῷ.

in purity or *ſanctification and honour*. And this *Commandment you know we gave you by the Lord Jeſus*'s order, ſo that *whoſoever among you deſpiſeth it, deſpiſeth not man, but God*, 1 Theſſ. 4.2,3,4,7,8. For *the wiſdom which cometh from above*, and which muſt carry us thither, *is in the firſt place pure* or * chaſt, *James* 3.17.

* ἁγνὴ.

Contempt of the world.

Love not the world, nor the things of the world; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John 2.15. *For the* eſteem and *friendſhip of the world is* in very deed downright *enmity with God. Whoſoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God*, James 4.4. *Godlineſs*, if it be joined *with contentment, is great gain*, ſaith S. *Paul*, 1 Tim. 6.6. And our *being content with ſuch things as we have*, is reckoned a part of that *Grace whereby we muſt ſerve God acceptably*, and be ſecured from his wrath, *who*, where he is angred, *is a conſuming fire*, Heb. 12.28, to the fifth Verſe of the thirteenth Chapter.

Contentment.

Self-denial. Taking up the Croſs. Mortification.

Chriſt ſaid unto them all, *If any man will come after me*, and be accounted one of my Diſciples, *let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs, and follow me*, Luke 9.23. *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *you ſhall live*, Rom. 8.13. Yea, its affections and deſires, as well as its ſinful actions, are to be mortified and brought under. *For they that are Chriſt's*, whom he will *own* for his at the laſt Day, and *reward* accordingly, *have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and* † *luſts* or deſires thereof, *Gal.* 5.24.

† Rom. 13.14.

Sobriety. Watchfulneſs.

They who would not be accounted in Gods judgment as *Children of the night and of darkneſs*, S. *Paul* ſays plainly, muſt *watch and be ſober*, 1 Theſſ. 5.5,6. For watching is neceſſary unto bliſs, *Bleſſed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find watching*, Luke 12.37.

Diligence.

And *give diligence to make your calling and election ſure*, ſaith S. *Peter*, *for* this is one of thoſe things, which

which *if you do, you ſhall never fall* either from your duty, or your reward, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10.

Thus are all the particular Laws recited in the firſt Claſs, *ſobriety*, expreſly bound upon us by all our hopes of Heaven; and our obedience to them plainly neceſſary to our life and pardon, when we come to be judged according to them.

And the Sanction is the ſame for all the Particulars of the *ſecond Claſs*, our *piety towards God*, as will appear by the following Scriptures. *Piety.*

Them that honour me, ſaith God, *I will honour*, or make honourable; *but they who deſpiſe me, ſhall*, on the other hand, *be as lightly ſet by*, 1 Sam. 2. 30. And *if any man be a worſhipper of God, him*, ſaid the man who had received his ſight moſt truly, *he heareth*, John 9. 31. *Honour.* *Worſhip.*

He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned, Mark 16. 16. *For this is the will of him that ſent me*, ſaith our Saviour, *that whoſoever believeth on me may have everlaſting life*, Joh. 6. 40. And what we hear of *Faith* is alſo ſaid of *Knowledge*: For *this is life eternal*, ſaith Chriſt, *to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*, John 17. 3. *Faith.* *Knowledge.*

The good things which neither eye hath ſeen, nor ear hath heard, i. e. the joys of Heaven, *are laid up for thoſe who love God*, 1 Cor. 2. 9. And *if any man love God, the ſame is known* or accepted *by him*, 1 Cor. 8. 3. *Love.*

It is *he who believes* Chriſts promiſes, or hopes *on him, that ſhall never be aſhamed*, Rom. 10. 11. And *we truſt in God*, ſaith S. *Paul, who is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe* or truſt in him, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. And a cheerful *dependance* upon Gods Providence for our *food*, and *maintenance*, &c. and not being *ſollicitous* about them, is one of the Particulars of Chriſt's Law, *Mat.* 6. 25, the ſanction whereof is expreſſed in the fifth. *Hope.* *Truſt.* *Dependance.*

fifth Chapter in theſe words, *He who breaks the leaſt of theſe Commandments, ſhall be leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, i. e.* according to the Hebrew manner of ſpeaking, *he ſhall be none at all*, v. 19.

Prayer. *Pray without ceaſing*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 17. It is this that muſt bring all bleſſings down upon us. For the promiſe is, *Ask and you ſhall have*, Matth. 7. 7. But no Petition being put up, no Grant can in reaſon be expected, *You have not*, ſaith S. *James*, *becauſe ye ask not*, James 4. 2.

Fear. *Gods mercy is on all that fear him*, Luke 1. 50. *I will warn you*, ſaith our Saviour, *whom you ſhall fear; fear God, who after he hath killed, hath* yet further *power to caſt you into Hell*, if you are fearleſs and contemptuous, *I ſay unto you, Fear him*, Luke 12. 5.

Thankfulneſs. *In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 18. It is one part of our *walking as Children of the light, to give thanks always, and in all things, to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Epheſ. 5. 8, 20. And the Apoſtle's exhortation is, *Offer to God the Sacrifice of Praiſe continually, giving thanks to his Name*; and that *becauſe we have no abiding City, but ſeek one to come*, Heb. 13. 14, 15.

Zeal. The Church of *Laodicea*, to the end that *ſhe may be rich and cloathed*, is adviſed to be *zealous and to repent*, Rev. 3. 18, 19. And one effect of *a godly ſorrow* and a *ſaving repentance*, S. *Paul* ſaith, is *zeal* for God and goodneſs, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

Obedience. *In Chriſt Jeſus* or the Chriſtian Religion, *neither Circumciſion* * *availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion; but keeping of the Commandments of God*, 1 Cor. 7. 19. For it is this only that gives right to life and happineſs, *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. 22. 14.

* Gal. 5. 6, & 6. 13.

Subjection or Regenedneß. *Our Fathers after the fleſh corrected us, and we gave them*

them reverence, and ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection to the Father of Spirits, and live? Heb. 12.9.

And thus are all the Particulars of this ſecond Claſs of Duties, *Piety*, bound upon us with the ſame ſanction as the former, and our obedience to them all made neceſſary to our being pardoned at the laſt Day, and eternally rewarded by them.

And the ſame is further true of the Duties of the third Claſs, *righteouſneſs towards our Neighbour.* *Righteouſneſs.*

For as for the neceſſity of *Juſtice*, S. *Paul* is clear, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another*, Rom. 13.8. For *if you wrong and defraud one another*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *know that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6.8,9. *Juſtice.*

And as for all the particular Laws of *Charity*, their neceſſity will appear from what follows. *Charity.*

Be kindly affectioned one to another, as if you were of the ſame blood and * near Kindred, *with brotherly love, in honour*, † *preferring one another* for your Vertues before your ſelves; and much more *vindicating* each other from the unjuſt aſperſions of others. *Diſtributing* or *communicating to the neceſſity of Saints*; *given to*, or earneſtly † purſuing *hoſpitality*; *Bleſs* or * ſpeak well of *them which perſecute you*; *Bleſs, and curſe not. Rejoice with them that* do *rejoice*, in *congratulation*; and *weep with them that weep*, in † *compaſſion. Be of the ſame mind one towards another*; *mind not* ſtate and *high things, but* be affable and *condeſcend*, by * going even out of your way to bear them company, *to men of low eſtate. Recompence to no man evil for evil*; *but if thine enemy hunger, feed him*; *if he thirſt, give him drink*, Rom. 12. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20. All which Precepts, with ſeveral others delivered in that Chapter,

Goodneſs or Kindneſs.
* φιλόστοργοι.
Brotherly kindneſs.
† Phil. 2. 3.
Honour of our Brethren for their Vertues.
Vindicating their injured reputation.
* κοινωνοῦντες.
† διώκοντες.
Alms-giving.
* εὐλογεῖτε.
Hoſpitality.
Speaking well of enemies.
† Gal. 6. 2. & 1 Pet. 3.8,11, 12.
Congratulation
Compaſſion.
unity.
Affability.
Condeſcenſion.
* συναπαγόμενοι.
Doing good to enemies.

Chapter,

Chapter, he gave in command, as he tells them, *through the Grace* or Authority of the *Apoſtleſhip*, which is here and * elſewhere called Grace, *given unto him*, v. 3; and that is a plain proof of their indiſpenſable neceſſity. For *he that deſpiſeth you* Apoſtles, ſays our Saviour, *deſpiſeth me*, Luke 10. 16. And if the *tranſgreſſion and diſobedience of the Law* of *Moſes ſpoken* to him only *by Angels* in the Mount, *received a juſt recompence of reward*, ſuch Offenders dying † without mercy; *how ſhall we eſcape* the ſame death or greater, *if we neglect*, and much more if we deſpiſe, *ſo great* a means of *ſalvation* as Chriſts Goſpel and his Laws are, *which was at firſt ſpoken to us by the Lord* Jeſus himſelf, who is far above all Angels, *and was* afterwards *confirmed to us by* his Apoſtles, or *them that heard him*, Heb. 2. 2, 3.

* Rom. 1. 5. & 15. 15. Epheſ. 3. 8.

† Heb. 10. 28.

Gentleneſs. Placableneſs. Mercifulneſs.

The wiſdom from above, and which muſt bring us thither, *is gentle, eaſie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits*, James 3. 17. And S. *Paul* bids the Coloſſians to *put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved*, theſe Vertues; *viz. bowels of* * *mercies, kindneſs* or † *courteſy, meekneſs, long-ſuffering* or *forbearing one another, and* * *forgiving one another*; *If any man hath a quarrel againſt any, even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo do ye*, Coloſſ. 3. 12, 13, 15. *The fruits of the Spirit*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *are love, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, meekneſs; againſt ſuch there is no* condemning force of any *Law*, Gal. 5. 22, 23.

* James 2. 13.

† χρηστότητα.

* Mat. 6. 14, 15.

Courteſie. Meekneſs. Long-ſuffering. Forgiving injuries.

The deſcription which S. *Paul* gives of Charity is this, *Charity ſuffers long* in great meekneſs before it be provoked, *and is kind* or † courteous towards all men; *is not puffed up* with ſupercilious and haughty behaviour, (for men do not aſſume ſtate over thoſe perſons whom they love,) but is lowly and affable; *doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly* or * contumeliouſly, but with much reſpect

† 1 Pet. 3. 8, 12.

Affability.

* ἀσχημονεῖ.

reſpect and civility; *ſeeks not her own* Praiſe and Glory, at other mens coſt or diſcredit; *is not eaſily provoked* or not provoked to the *x* height, but mixes mercifulneſs with anger, oppoſite to rigour; *rejoyces* or *y* congratulates *the truth* or ſincerity and integrity of men; and as for their infirmities, *it bears* or *z* covers and conceals *all things* that are defective; *believes all things* to their advantage, in putting the moſt candid and favourable ſenſe upon any thing which they do or ſay; and where there is no excuſe for the preſent, *it hopeth all things* good for the future; and for injuries offered to it ſelf, it is not haſty and vindictive, but patiently *endureth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6, 7. And for the neceſſity of that Charity, which includes all theſe, S. *Paul* is expreſs in the ſame Chapter; when he tells us that *although he have all faith and all knowledge, and beſtow all his goods to feed the poor*, yea, *and give his Body to be burned* in Martyrdom; if ſtill he *have not Charity* in all theſe other effects, and in that latitude wherein he is here deſcribed, *it profiteth him nothing*, ver. 2, 3.

x οὐ παροξύνεται. *Mercifulneſs.* y συγχαίρει. z στέγει. *Covering mens defects.* *Candor.* *Patience.*

I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs or *a* ſpeak all the good you can of *them that curſe* or reproach *you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you, that* by this means *you may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. 5. 44, 45. Which Laws are of the number of thoſe which are contained in Chriſts Sermon on the Mount, at the beginning whereof he declared, that *whoſoever ſhould break the leaſt of his Commandments* which he was then about to deliver, *and ſhould teach men* to do *ſo* too; *he ſhould be leaſt* or none at all *in the Kingdom of Heaven*, ver. 19.

a εὐλογεῖτε. *Speaking good of enemies.* *Doing good to them.* *Praying for them.*

Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart; thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin to reſt *upon him: I am the Lord*, who will ſurely puniſh thee,

Friendly reproof.

if thou neglect this, *Lev.* 19. 17, 18. But when *any man* by ſuch charitable admonition *doth convert a Sinner from the errour of his way, let him* for his encouragement *know this*, ſayes S. *James*, *that he ſhall ſave a ſoul* of him who is reproved *from death*, *and* beſides that, *ſhall hide* alſo *a multitude of* his own *ſins*, James 5. 19, 20. And as for the method of performing this, what courſe we are to take, and how far we are to proceed in it: our Saviour has ſet that down, according to what had obtained in the *b Jewiſh* cuſtom, *Matth.* 18. For there in the caſe of *c private* injuries, which are no fit Subject of Church cenſures that are exerciſed only upon *open* and *ſcandalous* Sinners, he preſcribes thus; *If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee*, take this courſe to reclaim him: *Go* firſt and *tell him* of *his fault* privately *between thee and him alone*; *if he ſhall hear thee*, and amend apon thy admonition, thy work is done, and without any more ado *thou haſt gained thy Brother*. *But if he* be not to be won thus eaſily, and *will not hear thee* admoniſhing him thus privately by thy ſelf alone; *then* give not over, but go one ſtep further; *take with thee one or two more* to join with thee in thy admonition, that by the authority of their concurrence he may be the more prevail'd upon, and *that* the reproof now appearing, not in thy mouth alone, but alſo *in the mouths of* thy *two or three Witneſſes*, *every word may* have the more effect, and *be* the firmlier *eſtabliſhed*. *And if he* ſhall be incorrigible ſtill, and *neglect to hear* both thee and *them* too; yet give him not over for a loſt man, but try one means more, which is the laſt that I enjoin thee: Pick out a ſelect Aſſembly and choice Company of men, who are more in number than thou tookeſt before, and *tell it unto that Church* or *d* Aſſembly, and reprove him before all them. *But if he* prove obſtinate againſt

b Their practice in this Caſe is thus deſcribed; *Qui arguit ſocium ſuum, debet primùm hoc facere placidè inter ſe & ipſum ſolum verbis mollibus, ita ut non pudefaciat eum. Si reſipiſcit, bene eſt; ſin, debet eum acriter arguere, & pudefacere inter ſe & ipſum. Si non reſipiſcit, debet adhibere Socios, ipſumq; coram iis pudore afficere; ſi nec modo quicquam proficit, debet eum pudefacere coram multis, ejuſq; delictum publicare. Nam certe detegendi ſunt Hypocritæ.* Lib. Muſar. as it is cited by *Druſius*, Not. ad loc.

c Verſe 21.

d ἐκκλησία.

againſt this laſt means, and *neglect to hear them*; then thou haſt diſcharged thy ſelf, and needeſt to look no further after him, but mayeſt *let him be unto thee* thenceforward *as a* loſt and hardened man, whoſe Converſion thou art no longer bound in vain to labour after, ſuch as we are wont to expreſs by a *Heathen man and a Publican*, v. 15, 16, 17.

Reſtraining our Chriſtian Liberty for our weak Brothers edification.

Take heed leſt by any means this Chriſtian *Liberty of yours become a ſtumbling Block*, or ſcandal *to thoſe that are weak*, by ſeducing and encouraging them, on the authority of your example, to do that againſt their Conſcience, which you, who know more, do according to it; *and ſo through thy knowledge ſhall the weak Brother periſh, for whom Chriſt dyed: But when ye ſin ſo againſt the Brethren, and* by ſuch unreſtrained liberty *wound their weak Conſciences, you ſin againſt Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 8. 9, 11, 12. It is a moſt uncharitable thing, and *without Charity all things elſe will profit nothing*, 1 Cor. 13. 3. *For if thy Brother be grieved*, or ſcandalized *with thy* liberty in *meat* or other things, *now walkeſt thou not charitably*, if for all that thou abſtain not from it; *deſtroy not him therefore with thy meat, for whom Chriſt dyed*, Rom. 14. 15. But if any man will ſtill be prone to give offence, his Sentence is ſevere and dreadful. *For he that ſhall offend*, or ſcandalize *one of theſe little Ones which believe in me*; *it were better for him that a Milſtone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea*, Mat. 18. 6. Rom. 14. 22.

And thus are all the particular Laws of Charity and Juſtice alſo impoſed with the ſame ſtrictneſs, and under the ſame neceſſity with the former.

Peace.

And that the ſanction is the ſame in the Particulars of the next Claſs, *viz. Peace*; will appear by what follows.

Peace.

Follow peace with all men, without which no man ſhall

see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14. It is not enough that we accept of it when it is offered, but we must enquire it out, and seek after it; nay, if it be denied us at first, we must endeavour after it still, and ensue it when it flyes from us; and that not coldly or carelesly, with weak desires, or little industry; but with the greatest concern and utmost diligence that possibly we can. *He that will love life and see good dayes*, saith S. *Peter*, *let him seek peace and ensue it*, 1 Pet. 3. 10, 11. *Be of the same* e *mind*, saith S. *Paul* among those Laws which he enjoins by his Apostolical Authority, Rom. 12. *one towards another; mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. If it be possible*, and *as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men*, ver. 16, 18. Yea, we must pay dear for it rather than want it, and bear long, and suffer much from men before we contend with them, and use all arts and shew all kindness to pacife and reconcile them. *Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing* or benediction, *knowing* this, *That we are thereunto called* in Christianity, *that* from our Lord Christ, who was so exemplary for it, *we should inherit* this Vertue of *f* speaking well and kindly of men, or *blessing*, 1 Pet. 3. 9. *I say unto you*, says our Saviour, *resist not* the *evil*, or injurious *g* man, which is the way to inflame and consummate contention, *but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat*, bear a little more, and rather than contend with him, *let him have thy Cloak also*, Mat. 5. 39, 40. Which Precepts, with all the others delivered in that Sermon, are bound upon us, as was observed, under the forfeiture of all right to happiness and Heaven, *ver.* 19.

The wisdom which cometh from above, and which must raise us thither, *is peaceable*, saith S. *James*, Jam. 3. 17. And

e 1 Pet. 3. 8. Phil. 2. 1, 2. *Concord. Condescension.*

Peaceableness.

f εὐλογίαν.

g τῷ πονηρῷ.

Forbearance or Long-suffering.

And S. *Paul* reckons it as one of the *Commandments which were given* to the Theſſalonians *by the Lord Jeſus, that they* ſhould *ſtudy*, even ſo as to be *b* ambitious of it, *to be quiet* or to acquieſce in their preſent ſtate, and not to interrupt the quiet and tranquillity of other men, *and to do their own buſineſs*, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 2, 11.

b φιλοτιμεῖσθαι. *Quietneſs. Doing our own buſineſs.*

The method of procuring pardon for injuſtice is preſcribed thus in the Law of *Moſes*; *If a man commit a treſpaſs* againſt another man, *and be guilty, he ſhall come and recompence his treſpaſs with the Principle thereof*, and over and above that, *i add unto it the fifth part thereof* more, *and give it unto him againſt whom he hath treſpaſſed*, Numb. 5. 6, 7. And Chriſt, although he do not define the particular proportion of the compenſation, doth yet eſtabliſh this ſatisfaction and reconciliation of our ſelves to our injured Brother in the general, as an indiſpenſable Duty, without which nothing, not our very Prayers or Oblations, ſhall be accepted, *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee*, having been injured by thee; *leave there thy gift, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother*, by giving him ſatisfaction for thy offence, *and then come and offer thy gift*, Matth. 5. 23, 24. Which Command is moreover one of thoſe whoſe ſanctions is the *loſs of Heaven*, ver. 19.

Satisfying for injuries.

i Luke 19. 8.

Bleſſed are the Peace makers; for they ſhall be called the Children of God, Matth. 5. 9.

Peace-making.

And thus we ſee of all the Laws which make any thing due to *God*, *our ſelves*, or *all mankind* in *general*; whether they are inſtances of *ſobriety*, *piety*, *juſtice*, *charity*, or *peace*: that our obedience unto them all is made neceſſary unto life, and that they are bound upon us by all our hopes of happineſs and Heaven.

And the ſanction is the ſame for all thoſe Laws which make ſome things due in *particular relations* likewiſe.

For

Laws in the relation of Subjects to our Kings.

For as for the Laws that bind us in the particular relation of *Subjects to our Kings*, their ſanction appears plainly from theſe places:

Subjection.

Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God; whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God: and they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation. Wherefore you muſt needs be ſubject, not only for wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake. Render therefore to all their Dues; as theſe following are to Kings, *Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom, Fear* or Reverence *to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour* i, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, 7. And all theſe are only part of that Catalogue of Laws, which he begins to reckon up, and declares to them by his *Apoſtolical Authority*, chap. 12. ver. 3.

Paying Tribute and Cuſtom. Reverence and Honour.

i 1 Pet. 2. 17.

Theſe things ſpeak and exhort, rebuke with all Authority, and let no man deſpiſe thee, who ſhall ſurely be puniſhed as a Contemner of Chriſt if he do. *Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities* and *Powers, to* k *obey Magiſtrates*, Tit. 2. ver. *ult.* & chap. 3. ver. 1.

Obedience.

k 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 15.

Prayer for Kings.

I exhort therefore firſt of all, that prayers of all ſorts, *ſupplications, interceſſions, petitions, and giving of thanks be made for all Kings, and ſuch as are in Authority; for this is* in it ſelf, and will render us *good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour*, 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3; and a proof moreover of that *good conſcience*, which *Timothy* is charged to keep, *chap. 1. ver. 19.*

And for *Fidelity* and *Allegiance*, this may ſuffice to ſhew its neceſſity, that among the *men of corrupt minds, who are reprobate concerning the Faith*, and who ſhould render the *laſt times perillous*, S. *Paul* reckons *Traitors*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 4, 8.

So that as for all the forementioned Duties of this relation, we ſee their indiſpenſable neceſſity, and that as ever we hope to be ſaved by them, we muſt perform and obey them.

And

And ſo it is in the particular Laws of the next relation, that of *people towards their ſpiritual Governours, viz.* their *Biſhops* and *Miniſters*, as is plain from theſe Texts following:

Laws in the relation of people to their Paſtors.

We beſeech you, Brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are ſet *over you in the Lord, and to eſteem* or honour *them very highly*, or *l* more than abundantly, *in love for their works ſake*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 12, 13. And this is one of thoſe Preceps, which are preſſed upon them as they would be *Children of light*, and *not of darkneſs*, ver. 5; and as they are *to avoid wrath* and *to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ver. 9.

Honour and Reverence for their works ſake.

l ὑπὲρ ἐκ περισσοῦ.

Let him who is taught or *m* catechized *in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth* or catechizeth *in all* n *good thing. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatſoever a man ſoweth* in this and other things, *that ſhall he alſo reap*, Gal. 6. 6, 7.

m κατηχούμενος.

n 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. 1 Cor. 9. 4, 7, 8, 9. 10, 11, 13, 14.

o *Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves; for they watch for your ſouls. Pray for us*, Heb. 13, 17, 18. Which are part of thoſe Precepts that are enjoined as the way *whereby to ſerve God acceptably, who is a conſuming fire* to deſtroy and devour all that dare offend him, *chap* 12. 2. *laſt verſes.*

Maintenance of Miniſters. Obedience. Prayer for Min.

o πείθεσθε τοῖς ἐπισκόποις καὶ ὑποτάσσεσθε αὐτοῖς· Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τοῦ πατρὸς, κ. τ. πρεσβυτερίῳ ὡς τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις, Ignat. Ep. ad Smyrn. Ed. Voſſ. p. 6.

And for the neceſſity of the ſeveral Laws in the particular relation of *Husband and Wife*; that will appear by what follows.

Laws in the relation of Husband and Wife.

For as for that love which is ſtrictly required betwixt them, *it ought*, ſayes S. *Paul*, agreeably to the words of God at the inſtitution of Marriage, *They two ſhall be one Fleſh*, to be ſuch as people have *for their own Bodies*, Epheſ. 5. 28, 31. Which cannot imply leſs than an *affectionate concern*, and *communicating in each others joy or ſorrow*; for if *one member* of a mans Body *ſuffer*, *all the reſt*, as the Apoſtle obſerves, *ſuffer with it*; *and if*

Communicating in each others bliſs or miſery.

one

one be honoured, all the rest rejoice with it: the Members all having the same care one for another, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. And also a *bearing with each others infirmities*, as every man will do with those of his own Body; and *praying for each other*. And for particular Duties, we are told in the same fifth Chapter to the *Ephesians*, that the *Husband* must *condescend* and *comply* with his *Wife*, and part, not only with his own *self-will*, but, even with his own *life* to serve her. *Husbands love your Wives*, saith he, *even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. So ought men to love their Wives, as their own Bodies*. And how that is, we all experience, *for no man ever yet hated his own flesh*, but *protecteth* it and *provideth* well and duly for it, or *nourisheth and cherisheth it*, v. 25, 28, 29. In which *love of his Wife*, as of his *own flesh*, is implied moreover, that his *Government* of her be *p flexible* and *obliging*; nothing being more contrary to our self love, than to be commanded in *peremptorines* and *rigour*. And then as for the particular Duties of the *Wife*, she is bid to be observant, or to *take care how to please her Husband*, 1 Cor. 7. 34. To submit her will to his, and to be ready to perform what he enjoins, as she is to do what God commands her. *Wives submit your selves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord: for the Husband is the Head of the Wife, as Christ is of the Church: therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ; so let the Wives be unto their own* q *Husbands in every thing*, Eph. 5. 22, 23, 24. And this submission she must shew in respectful carriage, and such behaviour as argues in her a fear to give offence, *Let the Wife see that she reverence her husband*, v. 33. And all these Commands enjoining Duties both on one side and on the other, which are delivered in that Chapter, are required as part of our *walking as Children of the light*, *and proving what is acceptable* unto the Lord, v. 8, 10. *Let the Husband render unto the Wife Due Benevolence, and likewise also the Wife*

Bearing each others infirmities.
Praying for each other.
On the Husbands side, Condescension and Compliance.
Providing for her.
Protecting her.
Flexible, winning Government.
p Col. 3. 19. 1 Pet. 3. 7.
On the Wives side, Observance.
Subjection.
q Tit. 2. 5, 15.
Reverence.
Rendring Due Benevolence.

Wife unto the Husband. For the Wife hath not Power, &c. 1 *Cor.* 7. 3,4,5.

Marriage is honourable, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge, Heb. 13. 4. *Fidelity on both ſides.*

Wives are to be *taught* to *be obedient to their own Huſbands, that the Word of God* or Doctrine of the Goſpel *be not blaſphemed,* Tit. 2. 5. *Let Wives be in ſubjection to their own Husbands. For with this in old time the holy women adorned themſelves, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling* & obſerving *him* as her *Lord, whoſe Daughters ye are as long as you do well,* & imitate her, but no longer, 1 *Pet.* 3. 5,6. *Obedience on the Wives.*

So that all the Laws in this relation are enjoined under the ſame neceſſity, and confirmed with the ſame ſanction as the former.

And as for the Particulars of the next relation, they are impoſed with the ſame ſtrictneſs. *Laws in the relation of Parents and Children.*

For *natural affection,* the want of it S. *Paul* affirms plainly *makes men* * *worthy of death,* Rom. 1. 31. * 2 Tim. 3. 3.

The Children ought not to lay up † Treaſure or provide *for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children,* 2 Cor. 12 14. And *if any man provide not for his own houſe, he hath denied the Faith of Chriſt,* which indiſpenſably enjoins it, nay, deſpiſing ſuch a notorious and neceſſary Precept of mere Nature, *he is worſe than any* honeſt *Infidel,* 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. † Θησαυρίζειν. *On the Parents ſide, Maintenance or Proviſion.*

Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath againſt you, by a harſh and auſtere Government of them, but rule them in kindneſs and love; and *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And ye Children* on the other ſide, * *obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right.* † *Honour your Father and Mother, that it may be well with you,* Epheſ. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. Which Precepts are of the number of thoſe, which he impoſes on them as parts of *their walking as Children of the light,* and *proving what is acceptable unto the Lord,* Chap. 5. 8, 10. *Loving Government. Religious education.* *Col. 3. 20, 21. † Mat. 15. 4. *Obedience on the Childrens ſide. Honour.*

If any man have Children or Nephews, let them firſt

Requiting their Parents.

learn to ſhew piety at home, and requite their Parents, for this is good and acceptable to God. But if any man provide not for his own, eſpecially thoſe of his own houſe or Family, as Parents are in the firſt place, *he hath denied the Faith*, and in his unnatural actions, *is worſe than an* honeſt *Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5.4,8.

And thus are all the Laws of this relation likewiſe eſtabliſhed in the greateſt ſtrictneſs, and our obedience to them made plainly neceſſary to our bliſs and happineſs.

Laws in the relation of Brethren and Siſters.

And as for the particular Laws of *natural affection*, and *communicating* upon occaſion *to each other of their Subſtance*, in the relation of *Brethren and Siſters*; they are proved to be neceſſary in the proof of the former: For the ſame places which require them in that relation, require them in this alſo.

Laws in the relation of Maſters and Servants

And then as for the Particulars of the laſt relation, *viz.* that of *Maſters* and *Servants*; they are of equal neceſſity with all the foregoing.

On the Maſters ſide, Maintenance.

If any man provide not for his own houſe, whereof Servants are one part, *he hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5.8.

Juſt and equal Government.

Maſters, give unto your Servants that which is juſt and equal, knowing that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven, who will puniſh your unequal dealing towards them, *Col.* 4.1. *If I deſpiſe the cauſe of my man ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they* argue in their own defence, and *contend with me; what then ſhall I do when God riſes up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him?* Job 31.13,14.

Punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling.

* Lev. 19. 13.

Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired Servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, a Jew, *or a Stranger*, of the Gentiles. *At his* * *Day thou ſhalt give him his hire, neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and ſetteth his heart upon it*, Deut. 24. 14, 15.

Weep

† *Weep and howl, O ye rich men,* ſays S. *James, for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you; for behold the hire of the Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, and which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth* againſt you, *and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord,* who hearkens to them, and in great Juſtice will one Day avenge them, *James* 5. 1, 4. † Jer. 22. 13.

Ye Maſters do the ſame things (*viz. good,* whether as to their Bodies, in *providing for them,* or to their Souls, *in religious inſtruction, with a good will, in expectation of a reward from the Lord*) *to your Servants, forbearing threatning; knowing that your Maſter alſo is in Heaven,* who has threatned you if ye neglect this neceſſary Duty, *neither is there any reſpect of perſons with him,* Epheſ. 6. 8, 9. *Religious inſtruction.* *Forbearing threatning.*

Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour, that the name of God be not blaſphemed, as certainly it would upon their contrary practice. *And if any man teach otherwiſe, he is proud, knowing nothing,* 1 Tim. 6. 1, 3, 4. *On the Servants ſide, Honour.*

Servants, obey in all things your Maſters according to the Fleſh; not with eye-ſervice, but in ſingleneſs or * ſincerity *of heart,* without fraud or double dealing, as perſons *fearing God. And whatſoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, not to men; knowing that of the Lord you ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance* for ſuch your obedient practice, *for,* in thus ſerving them, *you ſerve the Lord Chriſt,* Col. 3. 22, 23, 24. *Servants obey your Maſters with fear and trembling; not with eye-ſervice, as Men-pleaſers, but from the heart, with good-will, doing ſervice as to the Lord,* who commands this of you, and *not only to men; knowing that whatſoever good* or ill in this particular *any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord,* Epeſ. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Obedience.* * ἁπλότητι. *Hearty ſervice.* *Reverence.*

Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Maſters, *Obſervance.*

Vindicating their injured reputation. *Concealing their defects.* *Fidelity.*

and to pleaſe them well by all manner of obſervance *in all things*, either as to their reputation in *vindicating it when 'tis injured*, or *concealing ſuch defects* as would ſtain and ſully it, or their other intereſts: *ſhowing all good fidelity. For the Grace of God, which brings ſalvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching them*, as ever they hope to be ſaved by it, *That denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*, whereof the contrary practices to theſe are the effect and off-ſpring, *they ſhould live ſoberly*, &c. *Tit.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. And moreover, theſe Precepts are part of that *ſound Doctrine*, which *Titus* is required to *ſpeak*, v. 1. in oppoſition to their Doctrine, who, in the Verſe before, are ſaid to be *abominable*, *diſobedient*, and *to every good work reprobate.*

* σκολιῶς.

Servants be ſubject to your own Maſters, with all fear or reverence; *not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the* * hard or haſty and *froward. For this is thankworthy, if for Conſcience towards God you* patiently *endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully. This is acceptable to God*, and likewiſe neceſſary for you; *for even hereunto were you called*, that you may be like to *Chriſt*, who has *left you an example* of ſuch patient ſuffering for this end, *that you might follow his ſteps*, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19, 20, 21, *&c.*

And thus are all the particular Laws of this laſt relation impoſed in the ſame ſtrictneſs of obligation, and under the ſame ſevere ſanction with all the reſt that went before.

And as for the Law of *Baptiſm*, and of the *Lords Supper*, and of *Repentance* and amendment whenſoever we fail in any of the former, which are all the commanding Laws yet remaining; their neceſſity will appear from the Scriptures following.

Baptiſm.

Except a man be born again of Water as well as *of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, ſays Chriſt

Christ to *Nicodemus*, John 3. 5. And when Christ ſends his Apoſtles out to preach to all the World, that Doctrine which he commiſſions them to declare is this, *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved*, Mark 16. 16.

Take, eat, this is my Body: Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, you do ſhew forth the Lords death, which you muſt do, *till he come* the ſecond time to judge us, and to puniſh all impenitent Tranſgreſſors as well of this, as of all his other Precepts, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25, 26. *And this Command*, he further ſays *he received of the Lord to deliver to them*, v. 23. And for the fuller proof of the neceſſity of this Sacrament, that is very remarkable, which as ſome have obſerved, the *Jewiſh* Doctors have taken notice of, *viz.* that *whereas God forbad* twenty three things under *pain* of *being cut off from the people*, to them who *committed* them; yet in the whole *Old Teſtament* there are but *two* things *commanded* under *that penalty*, to thoſe who ſhould neglect them; and they are *Circumciſion* and the *Paſſover*, which are *Types* and *Figures* of, and anſwer to our two Sacraments, *Baptiſm* and the *Lords Supper*. And for that neceſſity particularly of the *Paſſover* among the *Jews*, which anſwers to the *Euchariſt* among us Chriſtians, where, as the Apoſtle ſays, *Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us*, 1 Cor. 5. 7, we have a plain Text at the inſtitution of it, *Exod.* 12. *Whoſoever*, in the Feaſt of the Paſſover, *eateth leavened Bread, from the firſt Day to the eleventh Day; that ſoul ſhall be cut off from Iſrael*, v. 15. Lords Supper.

Repentance and remiſſion of ſins thereupon is commanded *to be preached to all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. And as *Chriſt ordered*, ſo his *Apoſtles practiſed*. *Repent*, ſays S. *Peter* in his firſt Sermon, *and be baptized for the remiſſion of ſins*, Acts 2. 38. But without this there is Repentance.

no

no mercy for any wilful Offenders; for *except you repent*, says our Saviour, *you shall all perish*, Luk. 13. 3.

And thus we have seen of all the *commanding Laws* particularly, that our obedience to every one of them is plainly necessary to our salvation. They are that Rule which God has fixt to measure out to us either *Life* or *Death*, and which at the last Day we must all be eternally *acquitted* or *condemned* by.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Sanction of all the forbidding Laws.

The Contents.

Of the Sanction of all the negative or forbidding Laws particularly. The perfection of the Christian Law. How our Duty exceeds that of the Heathens under the revelations of Nature. And that of the Jews under the additional light of Moses's *Law.*

AS for all the Vices opposite to the several Virtues in the foregoing *Chapter*, which are the number of the *negative* or *forbidding* Laws; they must needs be under the same sanction, and our observance of them be bound upon us by the same necessity with our observance of the former. For whatsoever any of the particular Laws *commanding* any *Vertues* threaten, it is to these opposite *Vices*, which are the several transgressions of them. So that in shewing the *severe sanction* and necessity of the *one*, I have shown it sufficiently of the *other* also.

And

And this might very well excuſe me all further trouble, in ſearching after an expreſs ſanction of every particular forbidding Law.

But on the other ſide I conſider, that men are infinitely concerned to be fully convinced of the particular neceſſity of abſtaining from every Vice, as well as of performing every Virtue. And that there is much more force to work this full Conviction in an expreſs and particular proof, than there can be in a general and implicite intimation. And becauſe I would ſhun no pains, which may be likely to quicken the obedience, or ſecure the intereſts even of any one ſoul; I will not leave it to mens ſelves to collect and inferr this neceſſity, although the meaneſt capacities may do it without any great difficulty, but to proceed ſtill to ſet down ſuch ſanctions of all the particular *forbidding Laws*, as I meet with in the Scriptures.

And to take the ſeveral Claſſes of them in that order wherein they are deſcribed above, for the penalties threatned to all the Particulars of *unſoberneſs*, they will appear from the places following. *unſoberneſs.*

The works of the Fleſh are manifeſt, ſaith S. *Paul*, *which are adultery, fornication,* * *uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs,* † *drunkenneſs, revelling, emulation, of the which I tell you, that they who do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* * Mat. 5. 28, 30. † Luk. 21. 34. *Adultery. Fornication. Uncleanneſs. Laſciviouſneſs. Drunkenneſs. Revelling. Emulation.*

And beſides theſe, *if we live in the Spirit*, without which there is no hopes of happineſs, *Rom.* 8. 6; *let us not be* deſirous of * *vain glory, provoking one another*, Gal 5. 19, 20, 21, 25, 26. *Vain-glory.* * Prov. 27. 2. αὐτεπαινέτως μισεῖ ὁ Θεὸ, Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 30.

Neither the effeminate, thoſe that * ſuffer themſelves to be unnaturally abuſed, *nor the abuſers of themſelves with mankind, nor extortioners*, or † raviſhers and men that commit * rapes, *ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6 9, 10. * μαλακοὶ. † ἅρπαγες. * 1 Cor. 5 11. & 6. 10. *Effeminateneſs. Sodomy. Raviſhers.*

But

Fearfulneſs. * ἐβδελυγμένοι. Whoredome.

But the fearful and ſoft, the abominable, or * abuſers of themſelves with mankind, and whoremongers, ſhall have their part in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death, Rev. 21. 8.

Filthineſs. † μωρολογία. Obſcene Jeſting. * Col. 3. 8. Covetouſneſs. † εὐτραπελία.

Let not filthineſs, nor † fooliſh or * obſcene talking, nor jeſting or † filthy jeſts be ſo much as named among you. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, or covetous man, &c. hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and of Chriſt. Let no man deceive you, for theſe things ſake cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of diſobedience, Epheſ. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Carnality.

In the laſt Days perillous times ſhall come, for men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, or of their own * Fleſh, covetous, proud, Boaſters, or † arrogant, incontinent, high-minded, or * enormouſly haughty in behaviour or inſolent, lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God, or † ſenſual, having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof: from ſuch turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8.

Covetouſneſs. * Rom. 8, 6, 18. Pride. Arrogance. 1 Tim. 1. 6. Incontinence. † ἀλάζονας. Haughtineſs. * τρυφῶντες. Inſolence. Senſuality. † Jude 19.

Backbiters. * ἀλάζονας.

Being filled with covetouſneſs, Backbiters, Boaſters, or * arrogant, which in the judgment of God are worthy of death, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 32.

Gluttony.

The Servant that ſhall begin to eat and to drink with the drunken, ſhall have his portion appointed with Hypocrites, in the place where there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, Mat. 24. 49 51.

Voluptuouſneſs. Worldlineſs. † James 4. 4.

Many are enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt, whoſe God is their Belly, which they carefully ſerve in voluptuous eating, who are altogether † worldly, and mind earthly things; whoſe end is deſtruction, Phil. 3. 18, 19. Ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and been wanton; or ye have * lived deliciouſly, and fared luxuriouſly: Ye

* ἐτρυφήσατε καὶ ἐσπαταλήσατε.

have

Ye have nouriſhed or * fed *your hearts, as* men uſe to do Cattle which they intend for the Shambles againſt or *in a day of ſlaughter. Weep therefore, and howl for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you*, James 5. 1, 5. * ἐθρέψατε.

Love not the world, nor covet and *ambitiouſly* purſue the rich and ſplendid *things of the world.* But *if any man* do *love the world*, I declare this concerning him, that *the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. *Ambition.*

Bleſſed is he who ſhall not be offended in me, or not † ſcandalized and turned out of the way and profeſſion of my Religion, through any difficulties or perſecutions that befall him in it, *Matth.* 11. 6. For he who will ſave *his life* in this world, by fleſhly policy and wicked compliances againſt his Duty, *ſhall loſe it* in the world to come; *but whoſoever ſhall loſe his life*, or other temporal enjoyments *for my ſake*, or for an honeſt owning of my Laws and Religion, that ſame man *ſhall find it*, Matth. 16. 25. † σκανδαλισθῇ. *Refuſing of the Croſs.*

And for the prohibitions of the ſecond Claſs, *impiety*, we have their penalty expreſſed in the Texts enſuing. *Impiety.*

The works of the Fleſh are manifeſt, * *idolatry, witchcraft; of which I tell you, that they who do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. * Exod. 20. 4, 5. *Idolatry. Witchcraft.*

But the † *unbelievers, and ſorcerers, and idolaters, ſhall have their part in the Lake which burns with fire and brimſtone; which is the ſecond death*, Rev. 21. 8. † Mark 16. 16. *unbelief. Sorcery.*

The wicked man hath ſaid in his heart, God hides his face, he will never * *ſee* what men do, and therefore *he will not require* an account of *it.* But *thou Lord doſt behold miſchief and ſpite*, and that too *to puniſh* and *requite it with thy hand*, Pſal. 10. 11, 13, 14. * Pſal. 64. 5, 7. *Denying Providence.*

Being haters of God, without † *underſtanding* or fooliſh, *which* in the judgment of God *are worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 30, 31, 32. † Mark 7. 22. Tit. 3. 3. *Hating God. Fooliſhneſs.*

In the laſt days perillous times ſhall come, for men ſhall

* Mat. 15.19, 20.

Blaſphemy. unthankfulneſs. Headineſs. Diſhonour.

be * *Blaſphemers, unthankful, unholy, heady*; and theſe are men *of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 4, 8.

They that deſpiſe and diſhonour *me, ſhall be lightly ſet by*, 1 Sam. 2. 30.

Want of zeal.

Becauſe thou haſt no zeal for me, but *art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold; I will ſpew thee*, as men do warm water, which the Stomach loaths and nauſeates, *out of my mouth*, Rev. 3.16. *If we deny him, he alſo will deny us*, 2 Tim. 2. 12. And our *being aſhamed* of, and not *owning* and *maintaining* him and his *Religion*, although it be at a time when impiety is barefaced, in an *adulterous and ſinful Generation*, is interpreted by him for ſuch *damnable denial* of him. For what is called *denying me and my words*, Matth. 10. 33; is upon another occaſion repeated in S. *Mark*, and expreſſed by *being aſhamed of them*, Mark 8. 38.

Perjury.

† Deut. 5. 11.

Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid in old time, Thou ſhalt not forſwear or † perjure *thy ſelf, but ſhalt perform unto the Lord thy Vows. But* in addition to this *I ſay unto you, Swear not at all* in your common * converſe, *but let your communication* or ordinary diſcourſe *be yea, yea, and nay, nay; for whatſoever is more than theſe, cometh of evil*, Matth. 5. 33, 34, 37. And theſe Precepts are of the number of thoſe whereof Chriſt had expreſly ſaid, *ver.* 19. *He who breaks the leaſt of theſe Commandments, ſhall be leaſt* or none at all *in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

* James 5. 12. *Common ſwearing.*

Diſobedience.

The Law, with its terrors and ſevere ſanctions, *is not made for a righteous man*, who would do what it requires without them; *but for the lawleſs and diſobedient, for ungodly, for unholy and prophane, for perjured perſons*, that by means of its dreadful puniſhments, it might either *fright* them from ſinning, or take *vengeance* on them after they ſhould have ſinned againſt it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10.

Prophaneneſs.

Wo

Wo unto him that ſtrives, through * *contumacious* and *repining* carriage, *with his Maker*, Iſai. 45. 9. * *Contumacy.*

And for the neceſſity of obſerving the prohibitions of the third Head, *injuſtice towards men*, take theſe places: *Injuſtice.*

The works of the Fleſh are manifeſt, adultery, murder; of which I tell you, that they who do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 21. *Adultery. Murther.*

Being filled with all unrighteouſneſs, covetouſneſs, deceit, covenant-breakers, or perfidious, *who in the judgment of God are worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31, 32. *Covetouſneſs. Deceit. Perfidy.*

This is the will of God, That *no man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any matter*, or way whatſoever, whether it be extortion, oppreſſion, or plain † couzenage; *for the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch, as we alſo have forewarned you*, and teſtified, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 3, 6. *Circumvention. Oppreſſion.* † 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3.

Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither thieves, nor covetous ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Stealing or thievery.*

In the laſt Days perillous times ſhall come; for men ſhall be Truce-breakers, falſe Accuſers, or Slanderers and Calumniators; *from ſuch turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8. *Slander.*

Out of the heart proceed thefts, falſe witneſs, murthers; theſe defile or pollute *the man*, and ſo exclude him from Heaven, where nothing can ever enter that is unholy and unclean, *Mat.* 15. 19, 20. *Falſe witneſs.*

Thou haſt greedily gained of thy Neighbour by * *extortion, therefore I have ſmitten my hand at thy diſhoneſt gain. Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be ſtrong in the day when I ſhall deal with thee*, Ezek. 22. 12, 13, 14. * Lev. 25. 14. Luke 18. 11. *Extortion.*

All † *Lyars ſhall have their part in the Lake which burns with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death*, Rev. 21. 8. † 1 Pet. 2. 12. *Lying.*

Uncharitableness.

And as for all the Particulars of *uncharitableness* we have their sanction in these Scriptures following:

* 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5.

Maliciousness.

† Mat. 6. 14.

* ὑβριστάς.

Wickedness.

Envy.

Malignity.

Whispering.

Back-biting.

Implacableness.

unmercifulness.

Contumely.

Revenge.

Being filled with wickedness, maliciousness, full of * *envy, malignity, whisperers, back-biters,* † *despightful* or * contumelious, *implacable, unmerciful; who in the judgment of God are* all *worthy of death,* Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31.

Recompence to no man evil for evil, avenge not your selves; but rather, instead of that, *give place unto wrath,* Rom. 12. 17, 19. *For if ye forgive not,* but revenge upon men *their trespasses; neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses,* Mat. 6. 15. Deal thus therefore with your enemies, *not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing* or benediction, *knowing* this, *That hereunto are ye called* in Christianity, *to inherit* from Christs example this Vertue of *blessing* or speaking well of them, who revile you. And this is no indifferent thing. *For he that will love life, and see good days, must* thus *refrain his tongue from evil,* 1 Pet. 3. 9, 10.

Reproaching enemies.

† Matth. 5. 22.

Bitterness.

Anger.

Wrath.

Clamour.

Evil-speaking.

Malice.

Let all † *bitterness, and anger, and wrath* or hatred, * 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. *and clamour* or brawling, *and* * *evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice,* Ephes. 4. 31. And that *if you have been taught as the truth is in Jesus, to put off the old man, and to put on the new,* ver. 20, 21, 22, 24.

Exhort and rebuke with all authority, and let no man despise thee, (lest in doing so he be judged as a Despiser of Christ also, *Luke* 10. 16.) *Put them in mind to speak evil of no man,* to *be no Brawlers* or † Quarrellers; *but gentle, shewing all meekness,* opposite to surliness, *unto all men,* Tit. 2. *ult.* & Chap. 3. 1, 2.

† ἀμάχους.

Surliness.

In the last days perillous times shall come; for men shall be unthankful, fierce, Despisers and * *Haters of those that are good. From such turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith,* 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8.

* ἀφιλάγαθοι.

Unthankfulness.

Despising and hating good men.

Charity

Charity ſuffers long before it be provoked, and ſo is not *haſty* to puniſh; and *is* alſo *kind* or * courteous, and ſo not *uncourteous*; *Charity is not puffed up*, doth not † ſwell and exalt it ſelf above others in *ſtatelineſs* or *difficulty of acceſs* and uncondeſcenſion, but is condeſcenſive and affable; *doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly* or * contumelioufly; *ſeeks not her own* praiſe or pleaſure at other mens loſs or ſhame, and therefore neither *mocks*, nor *upbraids*, nor *reproaches* any; *is not provoked eaſily*, or not unto the † height, but mixes mercifulneſs with anger in exacting puniſhment, which is oppoſite to rigour; *thinks* or † imputeth *no evils* or vices to men, who are guilty of them, in *railing* and *reproach*, but kindly overlooks or leſſens them, as we are wont to do with perſons whom we love; *rejoiceth not in* evil, and leaſt of all in the higheſt ſort of it, *iniquity* of men, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4, 5, 6. And without this Charity, all other things whatſoever will at the laſt Day *profit nothing*, v. 3.

Haſtineſs to puniſh.

* χρηστεύεται.

Uncourteouſneſs.

† φυσιοῦται.

Difficulty of acceſs.

uncondeſcenſion.

* ἀσχημονεῖ.

Contumely.

Mocking.

upbraiding.

Reproaching.

† παροξύνεται.

Rigour.

* οὐ λογίζεται κακόν.

Rejoicing in evil.

The works of the Fleſh are manifeſt, which are hatred, envying, variance or * debate, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21.

Variance or Debate.

* 2 Co. 12. 20.

Be not deceived, no revilers ſhall enter into the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *I write unto you, that if any* Chriſtian *Brother be a railer*, to excommunicate him, and *with ſuch an one* to uſe no converſation no *not ſo much as to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. And our Lord himſelf hath determined, *whatſoever you ſhall bind* by excommunication *on earth, ſhall be bound* alſo *in Heaven*, Mat. 18. 18.

Railing or reviling.

Judge not, or be not forward to paſs † undervaluing and cenſorious judgments upon what other men do or ſay, *that you be not judged. For with what judgement you judge* others, you *ſhall be judged* your ſelves, both

Cenſoriouſneſs.

† Steph. MS. reads, μὴ καταδικάζητε καὶ οὐ μὴ καταδικασθῆτε. and you ſhall

Make not your ſelf a Judge to cenſure and give Sentence againſt any one, not have Sentence given againſt you.

by

by God and men, who will repay you in your own kind, *Mat.* 7. 1, 2. Which Precept we muſt note moreover is one of thoſe whereof Chriſt affirms, That *whoſoever breaks the leaſt of them ſhall be leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Chap. 5. v. 19.

uncharitableneß in Alms.

At the Day of Judgment Chriſt will ſay unto the uncharitable, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire. For* in my poor Members *I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; thirſty, and you gave me no drink; naked, and you gave me no cloaths; a Stranger, and you* were *unhoſpitable*, and *took me not in. For in as much as ye* refuſed it and *did it not to the* very *leaſt of theſe, ye did it not to me*, Mat. 25. 41, 42, 43, 45.

unhoſpitableneſs.

* σκάνδαλα. *Scandalizing weak Brethren.*

Wo unto the world becauſe of offences or * ſcandals; *for it muſt needs be that offences come, but wo unto that man by whom the offence* or ſcandal *cometh*, Mat. 18. 7.

Diſcord.

And as for all the prohibiting Laws in the ſin of *diſcord*, their penalty is expreſſed in theſe places:

† ἐχθραὶ. *Emulation or provoking one another. Striſe or contention. Seditions. Herſies. Schiſm. unpeaceableneſs.*

The works of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, hatred or † enmity, *variance, emulation, ſtrife* or contention, *ſeditions* or *diviſions, hereſies, envyings; of the which I tell you, that they who do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. And *if we live in the Spirit, let us not be deſirous of vain-glory, provoking one another*, v. 25, 26.

* μὴ πλανᾶσθε ἀδελφοί· μοιχοὶ εἰσὶν πᾶς ὁ ζηλοτυπῶν καὶ φιλαργυρεῖ, βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομεῖ. Ignat. Ep. ad Phil. Ed. Voſſ. p. 40.

Mark thoſe which are turbulent and contentious, or *cauſe diviſions and offences* among you, *contrary to the Doctrine which you have learned, and* * *avoid them. For they that are ſuch, ſerve not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 16. 17, 18. *Whereas there is among you ſtrife and diviſions, are ye not carnal?* 1 Cor. 3. 3. And what the puniſhment of that is, we are told in plain terms *for to be carnally minded is death*, Rom. 8. 6, 13.

† τὸ φιλοτιμεῖσθαι. *unpeaceableneſs.*

Study, ſo as to be † ambitious of it, *to be quiet*, which directly forbids all unpeaceableneſs, *and to do your*

your own buſineſs, not * buſying your ſelves in other mens matters. Which are of the number of thoſe Commands, that *were given them by the Lord Jeſus*; ſo that *he who deſpiſeth them, deſpiſeth not men, but God*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 2, 8, 11. * 2 Theſſ. 3. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 15. *Buſie Bodies.*

Thou ſhalt not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy people: I am the Lord, to judge and puniſh any man that doth, *Lev.* 19. 16. *Tale-bearing.*

I fear when I come, there will be found among you *debates, tumults*; *and I ſhall* be forced to *bewail many*, or excommunicate them with mourning over them as over a Dead Body at a Funeral, which was the cuſtom of the Apoſtles times, 2 *Cor.* 12, 20, 21. *Tumults.*

And as for the prohibitions in the particular relation of *Subjects* to our Sovereign *Princes*, their ſanction is expreſſed in the Texts enſuing. *Laws in the relation of Subjects to our Sovereigns.*

The filthy Dreamers who deſpiſe dominion, which implies both diſhonour and irreverence of it, *and ſpeak evil of Dignities, were before ordained to condemnation*, Jude 4, 8, 9. *Diſhonour. Irreverence. Speaking evil of Dignities.*

Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers; *for they that reſiſt* and rebel againſt *the* men in *power* and authority, *ſhall receive to themſelves damnation. Render therefore*, in fear of that penalty, *Tribute to whom Tribute, and Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom is due*, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. *Reſiſting lawful Powers. Rebellion. Refuſing Tribute and Taxes.*

Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man, and be obedient to it *for the Lords ſake*, from whom you ſhall receive a ſevere recompence of all your diſobedience; *whether* it be *to the King* himſelf *as ſupreme, or unto* lower Officers and deputed *Governours, as unto thoſe who are ſent by him*, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Diſobedience.*

In the laſt Days perillous times ſhall come, for men ſhall be fierce traitors, &c. *from ſuch turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 4, 5, 8. *Traitors.*

And

Laws in the relation of people to their Paſtors.

And as for the particular prohibitions in the relation of *people* to their *Biſhops* and *Paſtors*, their penalty is the ſame with the others already mentioned.

Diſhonour. Irreverence. Evil-ſpeaking. Mocking. Setting them at nought for their works ſake. Diſobedience.

He that deſpiſeth you, either your perſons by diſhonour, irreverence, evil ſpeaking, mocking, ſetting you at nought for your works ſake, or your Meſſage and Commands by diſobedience; in Gods account *deſpiſeth me* alſo, whoſe Meſſengers and Ambaſſadors you are; *and* in like manner *he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him* withal *who ſent me*, Luke 10. 16.

Not providing for them, or not maintaining them.

Do you not know that they which miniſter in the Jewiſh Worſhip and Temple *about holy things, live of the* maintenance of the *Temple? and* that *they which wait* in ſacrificing *at the Altar, are Partakers* of ſome portion of the Sacrifices *with the Altar? Even ſo hath God ordained* amongſt us, like as he did among them, *that they who preach the Goſpel, ſhould* for that have a due maintenance and livelihood, and * *live of the Goſpel. And ſay I this as a man*, only from common reaſon, equity and cuſtom; *or ſaith not* God, by a peremptory way of Command in *the Law, the ſame alſo?* For there *it is written, Thou ſhalt not muzzle the mouth of the Oxe which treadeth out the Corn. Which is ſaid not for the Oxen alone, but for our ſakes no doubt*, that we might not grudge the Labourer his hire, 1 *Cor.* 9. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14. And as he who ſhould deſpiſe this Law under *Moſes*, could not eſcape death; ſo much leſs can we, ſince Chriſt has made it one of his Laws, if we deſpiſe it now, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3.

* Gal. 6. 6. Matth. 10. 10. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18.

Sacriledge.

Thou that ſayeſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal? Thou that abhorreſt Idols, doſt thou commit ſacriledge? By ſuch ſcandalous ſins as theſe *the name of God is blaſphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written*, &c. *Rom.* 2. 21, 22, 24.

And

And as for the prohibitions in the relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, their ſanction is the ſame alſo. *Laws in the relation of Husband and Wife.*

No man ever yet hated his own Fleſh, ſo as to be eſtranged to it, or unconcerned for it, or not to bear with its infirmities, but by rubbing upon every ſore place to vex and provoke it; or not to hide and conceal its weakneſſes, but to publiſh and diſcover them. And as unnatural is this uſage between Man and Wife, *for they two are one fleſh*, *Epheſ.* 5. 29, 31. Which prohibition of hatred between Man and Wife, as between a Man and his own Fleſh, is ſet down as a neceſſary part of *ceaſing to be darkneſs*, and *becoming light in the Lord*, v. 8. *Unconcernedneſs. Eſtrangedneſs. Not bearing each others infirmites. Provoking one another. Publiſhing their mutual defects.*

No Adulterer ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 21. *Adultery.*

Husbands love your Wives, and be not bitter or paſſionate, uncomplying and imperious *againſt them.* And this you muſt do, as you would be accounted the *holy and elect of God*, Col. 3. 12, 19. *On the Husbands ſide. Imperiouſneſs. uncompliance.*

He that provides not convenient maintenance, *eſpecially for his own houſe*, whereof the Wife is the chief Member, *hath denied the faith* of Chriſt, *and is worſe than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8. *Not maintaining his wife.*

Teach Wives to be obedient to their own Husbands, leſt if they diſobey them, *the Word of God*, or the Chriſtian Religion, *be blaſphemed* for ſuch diſobedience of Women that profeſs it, *Tit.* 2. 5. *Diſobedience of the Wives.*

And as for the prohibitions in the relation of *Parents* and *Children*, what their ſanction is, theſe places will inform us. *Laws in the relation of Parents and Children.*

In the laſt days perillous times will come; for men will be without * *natural affection, diſobedient to Parents; from ſuch turn away, for they are people of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8. *Want of natural affection. Diſobedience in Children.*

* Ro. 1. 31, 32.

They who provide not for their own houſe, and eſpecially

Parents not providing for their Children.

for ſo near a part of it as their own Children are, *have denied the faith*, and are become *worſe than Infidels*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Provoking them to anger. Irreligious education.

Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath, and hatefulneſs of you, by a rigorous and harſh Government of them, *but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Epheſ. 6.4. Which are part of thoſe Precepts, our obedience whereof is neceſſarily required to our being accepted as *Children of the light*, Chap. 5. v. 8.

* Prov.20.20. Gen.9.22,25. *Reproaching Parents.*

*He that * curſeth*, by reproaching and publiſhing the ſhame of *his Father and Mother, ſhall ſurely be put to death*, Exod. 21. 17.

Contempt and mocking them.

The eye that mocketh at his Father, and deſpiſeth to obey his Mother, although the offence be not come ſo far as words, but is only a ſcornful and contemptuous look, a jeering and abuſive countenance; *the Ravens of the vally ſhall pick it out, and the young Eagles ſhall eat it*, Prov. 30. 17.

Robbing them.

He that robbeth Father and Mother, and ſaith it is no tranſgreſſion, but an innocent action, in regard he takes nothing but what either is, or one day will be his own; *the ſame is the Companion of a deſtroyer, i. e.* he deſerves to die as well as a Murtherer, *Prov.* 28. 24.

Contumacy.

If a man have a ſtubborn or contumacious *and rebellious Son, who will not obey the voice of his Father or Mother when they have chaſtened him; let them bring him to the Elders* or Rulers *of his City, and to the Gates*, wherein were the Courts of Judicature, *of his place, and let him be ſtoned to death*, Deut. 21. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Laws in the relation of Brethren and Siſters. Want of natural affection.

And as for the prohibitions in the relation of *Brethren* and *Siſters*, we have their penalty eſtabliſhed in theſe words:

Without natural affection, who in the judgment of God are worthy of death, Rom. 1. 31, 32.

He that provides not for his own, is worſe than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

And

Laws in the relation of Maſters and Servants.

And as for the prohibitions in the laſt relation, *viz.* that of *Maſters* and *Servants*, their ſanction is expreſſed in the places following:

On the Maſters ſide, unjuſtneſs, and rigour in commanding. unequal Government of them.

Maſters, give unto your Servants that which is juſt and equal, knowing that you your ſelves *alſo have a Maſter in Heaven* (who will recompence your injuſtice, rigour, and unequal Government of them upon your own heads, as Chriſt hath plainly ſhewed us in the *Parable of the Servants*, Matth. 18. from v. 23. to the end of the Chapter) *Col.* 4. 1.

Immoderate threatning. Railing at them.

Maſters, love your Servants, forbearing threatning, and, what is near a kin to it, opprobrious language or railing; *knowing that your Maſter alſo is in Heaven, who*, in judging and puniſhing ſuch offences as theſe, *is no reſpecter of perſons*, Epheſ. 6. 9.

Not maintaining them.

If any man provide not for his own houſe or Family, whereof his Servants are one part, *he is worſe than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Defrauding the hireling of his wages.

Weep and howl, O ye rich men, for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you. For the hire of the Labourers, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth againſt you for vengeance, *and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord*, who will moſt ſeverely puniſh this injuſtice, *James* 5. 1, 4.

On the Servants ſide, Diſobedience. Unobſervance. Anſwering again. Purloining. unfaithfulneſs.

Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Maſters, and not to be unobſervant of them, but to give all diligence to *pleaſe them well in all things. Not anſwering again, not purloining*; not being falſe or unfaithful in any matter, *but ſhowing all good fidelity. Theſe things ſpeak and exhort with all authority, let no man* dare, under the pain of Gods high diſpleaſure, to *deſpiſe thee*, Tit. 2. 9, 10, 15. Which things, amongſt others, he is bid to teach, in oppoſition to ſome who vented contrary Doctrines, who upon the account of thoſe Rules which they gave their Followers oppoſite to theſe, are called *abominable, diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate*, Chap. 1. 16.

Diſhonour. Irreverence. Publiſhing or aggravating their Maſters faults.

Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour, and not deſpiſe and diſhonour them by their irreverent behaviour, publiſhing their faults and wounding their reputation; *that the Name of God*, and the Chriſtian Doctrine, *be not blaſphemed* or evil ſpoken of through the contrary uſage. *If any man teach otherwiſe, he is proud, knowing nothing*, 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Eye-ſervice. * ἐν ἁπλότητι.

Servants obey your Maſters, not with eye-ſervice, but heartily and in ſingleneſs or * ſimplicity *of heart*, without acting double, *viz* ſomething whilſt their eye is over you, but nothing when it is off you; which you are bound to do, not only out of a dread of your Maſters anger, but as *fearing God*, who will be ſure to puniſh you, although your Maſter ſhould not take notice of you, *Col.* 3. 22.

Contumacy. † ἐπιεικεῦσι.

Servants, be not ſtubborn and contumacious, but *ſubject to your Maſters with all fear* and reverence; and that *not only to the good and gentle*, or † equitable and moderate, *but alſo the haſty* and moroſe or *froward*. *For if when you do well and ſuffer for it, you yet take it patiently; this* truly *thank-worthy and acceptable to God*. And indeed *hereunto are you called* in Chriſtianity, *to ſuffer* many times unjuſtly, but ſtill with patience, *as Chriſt did*, that hereafter you may reign with him alſo, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Thus is our obſervation of theſe particular prohibitions plainly neceſſary unto life, and indiſpenſably required to mercy and ſalvation. And as for that ſmall remainder of them, which are not expreſly inſiſted on in this proof, their neceſſity is ſufficiently evidenced by the indiſpenſableneſs of the oppoſite Commands, which in the proof of the *affirmative* Laws is ſhown expreſly.

As to all the particular Laws then recited in the foregoing Catalogues, whether they be *affirmative* or *negative*,

tive, Commands or *Prohibitions*; 'tis plain that they are all bound upon us by the ſevereſt ſanction, no leſs than our *fears of Hell* and *hopes of Heaven*. They are the adæquate and compleat matter of that *obedience*, which is to ſecure for us a happy Sentence. At the laſt Day we muſt all ſtand or fall by them; where they promiſe, God will beſtow rewards; but if they threaten, he will eternally condemn us.

And thus at length it plainly appears what thoſe *particular Laws* are, which under the ſanctions of Life or Death the Goſpel indiſpenſably binds us to obey. And upon the whole we ſee, That when we become Chriſtians, we are not turned looſe, and ſet at liberty to do what we liſt; but are put under a moſt ſtrict Rule, and bound up by a moſt exalted purity, and a moſt compleat and perfect love. The height of our Duty is anſwerable to the greatneſs of our Priviledges and advantages; For as never any people had ſo much * Grace given to them, as we Chriſtians have by the Goſpel, ſo never was there of any ſo much Duty required. *Luke 12.48.

The poor *Heathens*, who knew nothing more, either of Gods Laws, or of his rewards and encouragements, than they could argue themſelves into a belief of by the ſtrength of their own wit and reaſon; knew nothing of, nor ſhall at the laſt Day be condemned for the tranſgreſſion of ſeveral of thoſe Commands, which we ſhall dye for. So far were they from thinking that in the judgement of God *laſciviouſneſs*, *uncleanneſs*, † *filthy talk*, and *obſcene jeſts*, deſerved death, that as wiſe men as any among them did not believe it of * *Fornication* and *Whoredome* it ſelf. They were in no fear of being called to account then, and being found liable to eternal puniſhment, for being

† *Placet Stoicis ſuo quamque rem nomine appellare. Sic enim differunt, nihil eſſe obſcœnum, nihil turpe dictu*, &c. Cic. Ep. ad Famil. l. 9. Ep. 22. quæ eſt ad L. Papyrium Petum.

* To prevent Adulteries, this ſage *Cato* adviſeth to, *Quidam notus homo cum exiret Fornice, Macte virtute eſto, inquit Sir-*

angry

angry at an enemy, for * *curſing* or *reproaching*, for *praying to the Gods againſt him*, nay nor for other higher acts of *malice* and *revenge*. They never dreamed of being condemned for *cenſoriouſneſs*, *uncourteouſneſs*, *ſurlineſs*, *malignity*, *mockery*, *upbraiding*, *reproach*; and leaſt of all for *ſcandalizing an ignorant and weak Neighbour*, or *not relieving an enemy*, for *not taking up the Croſs*, or *not mortifying their own Bodies*. † Vain glory and emulation they looked upon as deſerving *commendation* rather than *reproof*: and *boaſting* and *oſtentation*, when it had no mixture of ill deſign, but was only for boaſtings ſake, even they who would find fault with it rebuked only as a * *vanity*, but not as a *mortal crime*. The moſt that any of them could ſay of theſe, or of ſeveral others, which it would be too tedious to mention, was that it would be a point of *praiſe* for men to obſerve them, but not of *duty*; they might be *adviſed* to it by a ſage *Philoſopher*, but not *impoſed* and *commanded* by a *Judge* and *Lawgiver*.

tentia Dia Catonis, &c. Horat. lib. 1. Ser. Sat. 2. *Nemo hic prohibet, nec vetat, quin quod palam eſt venale, ſi argentum eſt, emas. Nemo ire quenquam publica prohibet via; dum ne per ſundum ſeptum facias ſemitam, dum tete abſtineas nupta, vidua, Virgine, Juventute & Pueris liberis, ama quod lubet*, Plautus de uſu Meretricum in Curculione, Act 1. Scen. 1.

And *Cicero* in his defence of *Marcus Cœlius*: *Vincat aliquando* [*in adoleſcentibus*] *cupiditas rationem, dummodo parcat juventus pudicitiæ ſuæ, ne ſpoliet alienam*, &c. *Si quis Meretriciis amoribus interdictum juventuti putet, eſt ille quidem valde ſeverus, abhorret non modo ab hujus ſeculi licentia, verum etiam à majorum conſuetudine ac conceſſis. Quando enim hoc non factum eſt? Quando reprehenſum? Quando non permiſſum?* Cic. Orat. pro *M. Cœlio*. Upon the account of this Gentile opinion of the lawfulneſs of Fornication, and becauſe they reputed it as an indifferent thing, although really and in it ſelf it were moſt neceſſary, it is ſorted amongſt other indifferent things in the Canons made for the Gentile World at the Council of *Jeruſalem*, Acts 15. 20, 28, 29.

* *Minerva* in *Homer*, when ſhe adviſes *Achilles* to ceaſe the Quarrel with *Agamemnon*, and to keep off from fighting and blows; doth yet allow him this liberty, ἀλλ' ἤτοι ἔπεσιν μὲ ὀνείδισον, Ιλ. α.

† *Nullam aliam Virtus mercedem laborum periculorúmque deſiderat, præter hanc Laudis & Gloriæ: qua quidem detracta, quid eſt quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo, & tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?* Cic. Orat. pro Arch. Poet. ſub finem.

* ὁ μείζων γὰρ ὑπερχόντων προσπταίσειεν [which is his definition of ἀλαζών] μᾶλλον ἕνεκα φαύλου τοῦ ἔοικεν, μάταιος δὲ φαίνηται μᾶλλον ἢ κακός, Ariſt. Eth. Nicom. l. 4. c. 7.

Thus dark & defective was that ſenſe of Duty, which governed the *Heathen World*. The priviledge of a clear and full revelation of it, which God in *great degrees* afforded

afforded the *Jews* under the Law of *Moſes*, and us *Chriſtians* in the *compleateſt meaſures* under the Goſpel of Chriſt, was a Grace and Favour, which he did not vouchſafe them. *He ſhewed*, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, *his Word unto Jacob, and his Statutes unto Iſrael*; but he *hath not dealt ſo with any of the* heathen *Nations*; *for as for his Judgments*, or thoſe Laws which we are to be judged by, *they have not known* ſeveral of *them*, Pſal. 147. 19, 20.

And ſince not only the poor and *ignorant*, but even the more *wiſe* and *learned* ſort of Heathens were thus void of knowledge in the ſimplicity of their hearts, and did not deſcern ſeveral of thoſe to be Laws of God, which every one of us may diſcern moſt clearly if we will: although we muſt ſtand or fall by them, yet they ſhall not; but when they are brought to Judgment, they ſhall go unpuniſhed for their tranſgreſſions of them, becauſe they did not know them. They ſhall not be condemned for acting againſt they knew not what, nor ſuffer for the breach of ſuch Laws as were not ſufficiently publiſhed & proclaimed to them. *They that ſinned without* our *Law, ſhall alſo periſh*, not by it, but *without* our *Law*, according to the Sentence of ſuch other Law as are, not ours but, their own; *and* it is only *as many as have ſinned in* or under our *Law, that ſhall be judged* and condemned *by the Law*, Rom. 2. 12. Whatſoever they may ſuffer then for their tranſgreſſions of their *own plain natural Laws*, which all of them might have known that had a mind to it: they ſhall not be puniſhed for their ignorant breach of ſuch as are *peculiarly ours*, but that part of their offences ſhall be overlooked, and graciouſly connived at. For *thoſe times of ignorance*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *God winked* or connived *at*, Acts 17. 30.

And as for the *Jews*, although they had a *ſtricter Rule*

Rule and a *more perfect Precept*, anſwerable to their *clearer light* and *expreſſer promiſes*; yet were many *m* things ſtill for the *n* hardneſs of their hearts, indulged to them; for which without repentance we ſhall ſmart moſt ſeverely, if we are guilty of them. A man might be innocent in the charge made againſt him by the Law of *Moſes*, although he ſhould *return ill for ill*, or *o retaliate injuries*, and *curſe* and *pray againſt his enemies*. And this their moſt *righteous perſons*, and *greateſt Prophets*, even ** Jeremiah*, and *p David* himſelf, who was the man after Gods own heart, have done frequently. They had no expreſs Law threatning death to bare *ſenſuality* and *worldlineſs*; but the very conſtitution of their Law, which conſiſted mainly, if not wholly, in temporal promiſes, ſeemed much to encourage it. They were in no danger of being damned by *Moſes*, for not *bearing with the infirmities and weakneſſes of their wives*, ſince their Law it ſelf allowed them to *put them away* when they did not pleaſe them; yea, and even whilſt they continued with them, to *marry*, and *take others* to them. For all which, with others that might be mentioned, although we Chriſtians are liable

m *Plus tunc indulgentiæ erat, & plus licentiæ: tunc eſus carnium prædicabatur, nunc abſtinentia: tunc in omni vita jejuniorum paucisſimi dies, nunc quaſi annum jejunium Vita omnis: tunc læſis ultio ſuppetebat, nunc patientia: tunc iraſcentibus Lex miniſtra, nunc adverſaria: tunc accuſatori gladium porrigebat, nunc Charitatem: tunc etiam carnali illecebræ Lex indulgebat, nunc evangelium nec aſpectui: tunc corporeæ voluptates habebant quandam licentiam, nunc jubentur etiam oculi cuſtodire cenſuram: tunc ad multas uxores recipiendas unius Mariti torum Lex dilatabat: nunc etiam ad unam excludendam caſti affectus devotione conſtringit. Supereſt enim, inquit Apoſtolus, ut qui habent uxores, &c.* 1 *Cor.*7.29,30,31. ſays *Salvian* of the ſtrictneſs of the Chriſtian above the Jewiſh Law, *de avaritia, l.*2.*p.*383. *Ed. Oxon.* The reaſon whereof he adds *p.*385. *Majora ſolvimus, quia majora debemus. Judæi habebant rerum umbram, nos veritatem: Judæi fuerunt ſervi, nos adoptivi, &c.* And to the ſame purpoſe S. *Chryſoſtom*, Τὸ μὲν γὰρ παλαιὸν ἡ τοσαύτη ἡμῖν ἀρέσκη παρῆκεν μέτριον, ἀλλὰ νῦν ἀκριβῆ τὸν ἀνδρα καὶ φιλόσοφον εἶναι, καὶ μηδὲν ἀντιλοιδορεῖσθαι τῷ λοιδορουμένῳ, καὶ χρημάτων ἐπιμελήσασθαι ἑτέρων, καὶ ἑαυτοῦ μηδὲν ἀνύναι, καὶ ὀφθαλμὸν ἐξορύξαι ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ, καὶ νικῆσαι τὸν ἐχθρὸν, μὴ ὅτε τρυφᾶν, ὅτε ὀργίζεσθαι, ὅτε γυναῖκα· τὴν μὲν ἐκβάλλειν, τὴν δὲ ἑτέραν λαμβάνειν· καὶ ἐκεῖνο μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δύο καὶ πλείους ἔχειν ὁ νόμος ἐπέτρεπε, καὶ παλλακὰς ἐν τούτοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν ἡ συγκατάβασις ἦν· καὶ τὸ χριστοῦ παρουσίαν πολλῷ γενναιοτέραν γίγονεν ἢ ὁδός. Chryſ. de Virgin. c. 44.

n Matth. 19. 8.

o Matth. 5. 38.

* Jer. 18. 21.

p Pſal. 5. 8, 10. and 7. 6. and 28. 24. and 35. 8. and 109. from ver. 1. to the 20. all which Curſes appear to be directed againſt his Adverſaries, ver. 20.

to

to damnation, yet they were not. For they will be judged at the laſt Day according to their obedience to their own Laws, not to ours. *As many as have ſinned in the Law* of *Moſes*, ſayes the Apoſtle, *ſhall be judged by that Law*, Rom. 2. 12.

But as for us *Chriſtians*, we muſt walk by a more perfect Rule, and live up to a nobler pitch than ordinarily either *Jew* or *Gentile* did; or at the laſt day we ſhall be eternally condemned. For take even thoſe Sects among the *Jews*, which in the judgment of S. *Paul* [q] are the *ſtricteſt* of any in their *Religion*, viz. the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and yet, as our Saviour himſelf has peremptorily and plainly affirmed, our obedience muſt of neceſſity ſurpaſs theirs. *Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, you ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 20.

[q] Acts 26. 5.

In the accounts of our Religion we are guilty and puniſhable, when no other Law would take hold of us. For by the Goſpel of Chriſt, as we have ſeen, we ſhall be damned, not only for *Adultery*, *Fornication and Whoredom*; but alſo for *uncleanneſs*, for *laſciviouſneſs*; nay, for *filthy jeſts* and *obſcene diſcourſes*. We are liable to dye, not only for *drunkenneſs and revellings*, for *gluttony* and *ſurfeiting*; but alſo for *carnality*, *ſenſuality*, and *voluptuouſneſs*. There is enough againſt us to condemn us, although we do not *kill our enemy*, if we *hate him*, or *rail at him*, nay if we *refuſe to do good to him*, to *ſpeak well of him*, or to *pray for him*. We are ſtrictly charged not only that we ſhould not *lye* and *ſlander*, but moreover that we ſhould not ſo much as *revile* or *reproach*, or *mock*, or *upbraid*, or *cenſure*, or *ſpeak evil*. We are ſeverely threatned, not only if we *offer violence* to our Neighbour; but if we are *ſurly* towards him, if we are *haſty* and *fierce* with him, if we are *ſtately*, *uncondeſcenſive*, or *uncourteous* towards him. So far muſt we be

from *fighting* and *blows*, from *ſeditious and tumults*; that under the higheſt penalties we muſt abſtain from *clamour* and *brawling*, from *debate* and *variance*, from *unquietneſs*, yea from *pragmaticalneſs*, or *buſying our ſelves in others mens matters*. We muſt keep back from *diſhonour*, *irreverence*, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, whilſt we ſubmit to them; as well as from *diſobedience*, and *reſiſtance* of our lawful Prince in open *rebellion*. To *extort*, *depreſs*, or *circumvent our Brother in any matter*, is an Article of our Condemnation, as well as *direct theft*, and downright *robbery*. To *refuſe the Croſs*, to *ſcandalize a weak Brother*, to *envy our Neighbours praiſe*, and to be *vain-glorious*, *arrogant*, and forward upon all occaſions to *boaſt* and ſet off our own; are all mortal ſins in the accounts of our Law, and ſuch as ſubject the impenitent Actors of them to eternal deſtruction.

Theſe, and all the other inſtances ſet down in the foregoing Catalogues, which are too many to mention here, let us plainly ſee the height of that holineſs, and the perfection of that love which we are to live or dye by. Our Law is the moſt perfect Rule that ever the World heard of; and, as ever we hope for mercy and bliſs, ours is to be the moſt perfect obedience. For as all theſe Laws, which under the pains of Death we are bound to obey, are moſt Heavenly and Divine; ſo is that a moſt perfect obedience, which is indiſpenſably required to them. Which will more fully appear by clearing up what I am to ſhow in the next Book, *viz. What degrees and manner of obedience is indiſpenſably required to them.*

BOOK III.

What degrees and manner of Obedience is required to all the Laws forementioned.

CHAP. I.

Of Sincerity.

The CONTENTS.

The first qualification of an acceptable Obedience, that it be sincere. Two things implyed in sincerity, truth or undissembledness, and purity or unmixedness of our service. Of the first Notion of sincerity, as opposite to hypocrisie, or doing what God commands out of a real intention and design to serve him. Of a two-fold intention, actual and express; or habitual and implicite. Of intention in general, and of these two in particular. Where an actual intention is necessary, and where an habitual is sufficient to our obedience. Of the second Notion of sincerity, as it notes purity of our service in opposition to mixture and corrupt alloy. This Point stated, viz. *What intention of our good, together with Gods service, is consistent with an acceptable and sincere Obedience, and what destroys it. Integrity of our Obedience a sure mark, whereby to judge whether it be sincere or no.*

THE Qualifications which muſt render our obedience acceptable to Almighty God, and make it avail us unto life and pardon at the laſt Day, are comprehended in theſe *two*;

1. Sincerity.
2. Integrity.

1. To render our obedience to the forementioned Laws of God acceptable, and available to our ſalvation at the laſt Day; it is neceſſary that it be *ſincere*.

* εἰλικρινὴς quaſi ἕλην κρινόμενον: that, being true, and not counterfeit, doth not fear the light, but is willing to be tryed in the brighteſt Sun. And the Apoſtle joins theſe two, ἐν ἁπλότητι καὶ εἰλικρινείᾳ, oppoſing *ſincerity* to *fraud*, and a *double heart*, and making it the ſame with *ſimplicity*, 2 *Cor.* 1.12. And again he joins it with *Truth*, *The unleavened Bread of ſincerity and truth*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 8. And ſo *ſincerus* by the Latine Grammarians is derived from σὺν and κὴρ, as ſignifying the ſame with *cum corde*, *heartily* and *unfeignedly*.

Sincerity is a * *true and undiſſembled ſervice of God*, oppoſite to *hypocriſie*, or a *falſe* and *feigned pretence of obeying him*, *when in reality we only ſerve our own ſelves*.

For we muſt take notice, that God has been ſo gracious to us in chuſing out the inſtances of our Duty and of his Commands, as to *adopt*, for the moſt part, thoſe particular *ſorts* of *actions* into the matter of our *obedience*, which by the natural Order and Conſtitution of things make for our own preſent *pleaſure*, *reputation*, or *intereſt*. And every one of theſe, from the firſt and fundamental principle of our Natures, *ſelf-love*, are ſufficient inducement to us to practiſe them, although God had never laid his Commands upon them. So that although we have no kindneſs at all for God, nor would do any thing for his ſake; yet ſhall we obſerve many things which he enjoins us, not for *his pleaſure*, but our *own*. Thus, for inſtance, may we be *chaſt*, and *ſober*, and practiſe all other Vertues that are gainful, not becauſe we love God; but only becauſe we *love mony*. We may be *juſt* and *honeſt*, and *ſeemingly religious*; not for the ſake of a *Commandment*, but of our *own credit*,

credit, becauſe the contrary practice would wound our good Name in the world, and ſtain our reputation. And now when our own *luſts* and *vices*, our *carnal pleaſures*, and *temporal advantages* ſtrike in after this manner with Gods Laws, and command the ſame ſervice which he enjoins us; we may pretend, if we will, and as too oft we do, that all is for his ſake, and that theſe performances, which are really owing to our own *ſelf-intereſts*, come from us upon the account of *Religion* and *Obedience*. And when we falſifie and feign thus, it is flat diſſimulation. It is no more but *acting the part* of an obedient and religious man, ſeeing, like an b *Actor* on the *Stage*, we are that perſon whom we repreſent, not in *inward truth* and *reality*, but only in *outward ſhew* and *appearance*, which is the very nature of *hypocriſie*.

b ὑποκρίσις is joyned with θεαθῆναι, *Matth.* 6. 5. which is an intimation of its being taken from publick Plays and Theaters.

But for a man to be *ſincere* in Gods ſervice, is the ſame as *really to intend that obedience which he profeſſes*. It is inwardly and truly to will and do that for his ſake, which in outward ſhew and appearance we would be thought to do. It is nothing elſe, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, but *truth in the inward parts*, Pſal. 51; the having our inward deſign and intention, to agree with our outward profeſſion; and being verily and indeed thoſe obedient perſons, which we pretend to be.

And as for this ſincerity of our performance of what God requires, *viz. our doing it for his ſake, and becauſe he commands it*: it is altogether neceſſary to make ſuch *performance* become *obedience*, and to qualifie us for the rewards of thoſe that obey. For without it we do not obſerve c Gods will, but our own; his Command

c *Si pro arbitrio ſuo Servi Dominis obtemperant, nec in iis quidem, in quibus obtemperavint, obſequuntur. Quando enim Servus ex Domini juſſis ea facit tantummodo quæ vult facere; jam non Dominicam implet voluntatem, ſed ſuam*, Salvian. de Gub. Dei, l. 3. p. 79. Ed. Oxon.

had

had no ſhare in what we did, becauſe it had been done although he had ſaid nothing; ſo that in our performance of it we ſerved not him, but our own ſelves. And what has God to thank us for, if we do nothing but our own pleaſure? Wherein do we ſerve him, by acting only according to our own liking? That cannot be charged on him, which is not deſigned for him; and if we do what he commands no otherwiſe than thus, it is all one as if we had done nothing.

But if ever we expect that God ſhould judge us at the laſt Day to have obeyed him, we muſt be *ſincere* in our obedient performances. For *the Lord looketh not on the* d *outward appearance* and pretence, ſaith *Samuel*, *but he looks on the* inward intention and deſign, which is the *heart*, 1 *Sam.* 16. 7. *He ſaves*, as the Pſalmiſt tells us, *the upright in heart*, *Pſal.* 7. 10. And again, *As for the upright in heart*, *they*, and they alone, *ſhall glory*, *Pſal.* 64. 10. For it is not from the bare outward appearance and profeſſion, but *from the heart*, ſays *Solomon*, that proceed *the iſſues of life*, *Prov.* 4. 23. *And* this is plainly declared in the expreſs words of the Law it ſelf. For it accepts not a heartleſs ſervice, nor accounts it ſelf *obeyed* by what was never *intended* for it. But thus it beſpeaks us: *The Lord thy God requires thee to ſerve him with all thy* e *heart*, *and with all thy ſoul. For he is a great God*, *a mighty and a terrible* to all that do otherwiſe, *and who* in his Judgment *regardeth not perſons*, *nor* to corrupt him *taketh rewards*, Deut. 10. 12, 17. And the Apoſtle tells the Philippians, that their *being ſincere* is the way *to be without offence till the Day of Chriſt*, Phil. 1. 10.

d Rom. 2. 28, 29.

e Mat. 22. 36, 37, 38.

And thus we ſee, that to render our obedience acceptable at the laſt Day, it is abſolutely neceſſary that it be ſincere and unfeigned. We muſt do what Gods Laws preſcribe, not only becauſe our own credit or intereſt

tereſt ſometimes requires it, but becauſe God has commanded it. In all our obedient performances our heart and deſign muſt go along with him, before ever he will recompence and reward us.

So that 'tis plain we cannot obey God, either againſt our will and intention, or without them; ſeeing our wills and intentions themſelves are the very life and ſoul of our obedience. The prime part of our Duty conſiſts in the directing of our Deſign: for even that which is done agreeably to Gods Command muſt be aimed and intended for him, or elſe it will never be owned and approved by him.

But that we may the better judge of this *ſincerity* of our ſervice, which is meaſured by our *intention* and deſign; we muſt take notice of a two fold intention. For it is either,

1. *Actual* and *expreſs*. Or,

2. *Habitual* and *implicite*. Now it is this *latter*, which is alwayes and indiſpenſably required to the ſincerity of our ſervice; but as for the *former*, it is not alwayes neceſſary, though oftentimes it be.

Intention is the *tendency of the ſoul towards ſome end which it likes, and which it thinks to compaſs and endeavour after*. And this is one prime requiſite in the actions of men, and that which diſtinguiſheth our operations from the actions of brute Beaſts; for what they do, proceeds from the neceſſary force of *uncontriving Nature* and *inſtinct*; but what we, from *reaſon* and *deſign*.

And the cauſe of this difference is this, Becauſe God has given the *brute Beaſts* no higher Guide and Commander of their actions, than *appetite* and *paſſion*, whoſe motions are not *choſen* with freedom, and raiſed in them by *reaſon* and *thought*; but meerly by the *neceſſitating force* of *outward objects* themſelves, and thoſe impreſſions

impreſſions which they make upon them. For they act altogether through *love* and *hatred*, *hopes* and *fears*; and they *love* and *hate*, not through *reaſon* and *diſcourſe* but through the *natural* and *mechanical ſuitableneſs* or *offenſiveneſs* of thoſe objects, which they act for.

But as for us *men*, he has put all our actions under the power and in the diſpoſal, not of *outward things*, but of ſomething within us, even our own *free will*. They are not impoſed upon us by the force of any thing without us, but are freely choſen by us; we are not their Inſtruments, but their Authours; they flow from our own pleaſure, and undetermined choice.

Now as our actions are at the diſpoſal, and command of our wills; ſo do our wills themſelves command and diſpoſe of them, not *blindly* and by *chance*, but always for ſome *reaſon*, and upon ſome *deſign*. For in *themſelves* they are *indifferent*, to make us either *omit* or *act*, *neglect* or *exert* them. And therefore to determine our wills, one way rather than the other, to act them rather than to let them alone, they muſt be moved and perſwaded by ſuch Arguments, as are fit to win upon them. Now that which can move and gain upon our wills is only *goodneſs*. We will and deſire nothing but what we think is *good* for us and which tends ſome way or other to better and advantage us. For what we believe is *inſignificant* and *uſeleſs*, we *contemn*; and what is *hurtful* and *evil*, from the firſt Principle of our Natures, *ſelf-love*, we ſtraightway entertain with *hatred* and *avoidance*, but never with *love* and *good will*. So that whenſoever we will and chuſe to act, rather than to ſit ſtill; it is always for ſome *end* which we propoſe to our ſelves, and by reaſon of ſome *good* or other which we expect to get by it. For no man will be at pains for nothing, or labour without aiming at any recompence; but ſome *end* or *goodneſs* there muſt ſtill be,

be, which is to move our wills, and make them chooſe *rather* to act, than to ſit idle. All our Actions therefore are only as *means*, and there is always ſome *end* or other of them which we propoſe to our ſelves to reap from them; ſomething which we like, and which we think they tend to, that makes us employ our Powers in the production of them. And this *eying* or *aiming* at the *End* or *Motive*, whereunto we ſee our Action *tends*, and for the *ſake whereof* we *ſet about it*, is our *Intention* of it.

Thus we ſee that all our Actions agree in this, that they are choſen for the ſake of ſome end, and exerted upon ſome intention and deſign.

But in the *manner* of this Intention there is ſome difference: For ſometimes in acting we actually and expreſly think of that Good we are moved by, and look up to that end we act for, and operate in direct order, and reſpect to it; which is an *actual* and *expreſs intention*. But at other times, we do not look expreſly further than the act it ſelf; but through a ſetled Intention before made, and, as to its full force in determining of our Wills towards that Good which we act for, yet continuing; we readily do what tends towards it, without ever expreſly eying, or deſigning of it. Our former Intention was ſo full and ſo effectual, that it has determined our choice of the action ſo far, as that our Wills need nothing more to make them command that it be done, than to be offer'd the opportunity of doing it. They are ſufficiently moved by the *End* for which the Action is to be undertaken, and their *conſtant temper* and *inclination* is to bend after it. So that when a particular Action occurrs, which is to be choſen for the ſake of it, they need not *actually* to think of it, and look up to it; but are ſufficiently inclined to act in order to it, through their *habitual tendency*

dency and propenſion towards it. And this being no *expreſs intuition*, and *particular deſigning* of the end which we act for, but only a *ſetled tendency* and inclination in the ſoul after it, which through long *uſe* and *cuſtome* is become its *conſtant temper* and *habitual*; it may be called an *habitual*, or *implicit intention*.

Now both theſe ſorts of Intention have their place, as in all our *other Actions*, ſo particularly in thoſe of *Virtue* and *Obedience*. For ſometimes our performances of thoſe things which God requires are *ſtudied*, and *deliberate*; we pauſe at them before we exert them, and think and perſwade our ſelves into the production of them. And in regard the *great motive* or *end* of exerting them, (*viz.*) *Gods command and injunction of them*, is the *great Argument* to win us over to them; when we take time and ponder ſo, we act through a *particular* and *expreſs intention*. But then at other times we do what God enjoyns before we are *aware*; we need not deliberate about it, or argue our ſelves into the practice of it; but ſtand ready to perform it, as ſoon as opportunity is offered. And here the will being already inclined of it ſelf to exert the action, becauſe God has commanded it, it needs no arguments to move, nor any expreſs intuition of the end to perſwade it, but indeliberately chooſes to obey out of its own *habitual temper*, and *implicit intention*.

And as for the *cauſe* of this difference of our *Intention* in doing thoſe things which God commands; it is plainly the *different degrees, and perfection of our Obedience*. For when our Virtue and Obedience are of *ſmall ſtrength*, and in an *imperfect degree*; there our *Luſts* have a conſiderable *Power* with us, as well as our *Religion*; and although they have not force enough eventually to hinder, yet they have ſo much, as will ſuffice them to contend with, and to oppoſe the doing

of

of our duty: So that even when we do obey in *this ſtate*, and cloſe with Gods command, it is by a *ſtrife* and a *war*, by *conflict* and *victory*. Now here our wills are in doubt what way they ſhall determine their choice, for they are canvaſſed and beſet on both ſides, both by *God* and by our own *Fleſh*, by our *Duty* and our *Appetites*. And to enable *Religion* to prevail with them in this conflict above our *Paſſions*, there is a neceſſity of repreſenting all its force, and of ſetting all its motives before them, that thereby they may be induced to ſtrike in with it, and to chooſe what it commandeth. But now as for the main *end* and *motive* of all our *Religious Services*, it is *Gods having injoyned and commanded them*. It is for *his ſake*, that we perform them; that we may *endear our ſelves to him*, by *doing of his pleaſure*. So that to enable us to chooſe obedience to Gods Laws, rather than to our own Luſts, we muſt ſet him and his command before us. They are the end for which we are to work, the motive and argument that muſt bear us out, and make us effectually willing to do what we are required. In this ſtate then of *ſtrong luſts* and *imperfect obedience*, to enable us to chooſe to do what God injoyns, when our own Luſts do powerfully incline us to do the contrary; we have need of an actual thought and intuition of God and his command, which is the great end and motive that muſt determine us for him, and bear down all that oppoſition which our Luſts make againſt him: So that all the obedience which we perform here, is through a *particular* and *expreſs intention*.

But then on the other ſide, when our Virtue and Obedience is of full growth, and we are ſo accuſtomed to do what God requires, that now we find no reluctance or oppoſition to it, but uſe has made it become, not ſo much our *conſiderate choice*, as our *natu-*

ral and *indeliberate performance*; here our wills are ready of themſelves to embrace the inſtance wherein we are to obey, as ſoon as it is offered: We need not to conſider and think our ſelves into a choice and practice of that which is commanded: for our natural bent and habitual tendency is towards it, and nothing more is wanting to our performance of it, than our being ſhew'd it. The Action of Obedience is choſen before it is offered, and all our Principles of working ſtand ready and prepared for it. For the intention of ſerving God is confirmed without all reſerve, and the decree of our wills is paſt already to perform what we have intended, ſo that as ſoon as ever an opportunity for obedience is preſented, we have nothing left to deliberate and conſider of, but without all doubtings or delay go on to work and practiſe it. And all this, as I ſaid, is a genuine and direct effect of our Obedience having acquired *great degrees of ſtrength*, and becoming *cuſtomary* and *habitual*. For *Cuſtom*, as it is truly ſaid, is a *ſecond Nature*; ſuch things as have been long *uſed by us*, ſtick as cloſe to us, and flow as *eaſily*, as *quickly*, as *indeliberately* and *naturally* from us, as thoſe things that are *born with us*. They do not ſtay for our particular contrivance and deſignation of them, but run before it. A man by long cuſtom ſhall have his fingers move ſo faſt upon a *Lute*, that thought it ſelf ſhall not be able to keep time with them, and anſwer every ſtop with a particular intention and command of it. An *habitual Swearer*, when occaſion is offered, or without any, will rap out Oaths when he is not aware; and ſo little many times was there of actual contrivance and expreſs deſign in it, that when he hath done he doth not know it. And the caſe is the ſame in other *habitual ſinners*, whoſe tranſgreſſions, proceeding not ſo much from a particular and expreſs choice,

choice, as from an habitual temper, and even natural inclination, are unconſidered, and indeliberate. And therefore when our Obedience it ſelf is become cuſtomary, and uſe has wrought it into our very Nature; we have no need, upon every return of opportunity, to eye Gods command, which is the *end*, and to intend his ſervice as a motive to our wills, to engage them to chuſe the Action before us which tends to it. We ſtay not to bethink our ſelves, what it tends to, and who is to be ſerved by it, and after that to intend expreſly to ſerve him in it. No, all theſe were done to our hands before the time of obeying came, ſo that now, when we have the opportunity, we do not buſie our ſelves in exciting them, but in this habitual ſtate of things, and perfection of obedience, act ordinarily in the force of them, which is obeying through an *habitual* and *implicite intention.*

And now from what has been ſaid of this *Perfection and cuſtomarineſs of our obedience*, being the cauſe of our obeying only through an *habitual intention*; it plainly appears, that not the *actual*, but *habitual* intention of ſerving God, is that which is *always*, and *indiſpenſably* required to a *ſincere* ſervice of him. Indeed when we *pauſe*, and *deliberate*, and take ſeveral things into our *conſideration*, a *particular intention* of his ſervice is neceſſary to make what we do upon ſuch deliberation an *acceptable obedience*: For if in the deliberation our choice was doubtful as to the *event*, ſuch particularity of intention was neceſſary to make us chuſe the *Action* of obedience; and if it were doubtful as to the *motive*, when other things *ſufficient* to make us act as we did, (as the ſervice of our *Luſts* or *Intereſts*) concurr'd to it as well as *Gods Command*; then is it neceſſary to make us chuſe the *acceptable ſervice* of obedience. But for that intention, I ſay, which

is

is not only here in *this* case, or some *others*, but *universally*, and in *all*, indispensably necessary to the *sincerity* of our obedience, it is an *habitual intention*. For the very reason why we do not intend his *service particularly* and *expressly*, but only *habitually* and *implicitely*, is because our obedience has arrived to good perfection, and long use and custom has made it, not so much at every turn our considerate choice and contrivance, as our very Nature, and unstudied inclination. Now this exaltation of *Obedience* into a natural *temper* is so far from rendring it *unsincere*, and making God look upon it as none at all; that in very deed it is the height and perfection of that, which his Gospel commands us to aspire and aim at. For there our Duty is expressed by our *being* f *born again*, by our becoming g *New Men*, h and *New Creatures*, and by our being made i *partakers of the Divine Nature*, and so like unto God himself, who is carried on to all actions of *Virtue* and *Holiness*, not by the motives of Reason and Argument, but by the exact and infinite goodness of his own Nature it self.

f John 3. 3.
g Ephes. 4. 24. Colosſ. 3. 10.
h Gal. 6. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 17.
i 2 Pet. 1. 4. Mat. 5. 48.

So that in measuring the sincerity of our Obedience by the reality of our intention and design for Gods service, we see that we are not alwayes to exact of our selves a particular and express intention, because God requires it not; but may, and often must, when our Obedience becomes natural and habitual, take up with an intention that is so too.

But for the fuller understanding of this condition of our Obedience, *Sincerity*, we must consider, not only the *reality* and *undissembledness* of our service and intention, which have been discoursed of hitherto, but their *uncorruptness*, and *unmixedness* likewise. And this, as well as the former, is sometimes signified by sincerity, which is used to denote, not *Truth* only and *reality*, in

in oppoſition to *Fiction* and *Hypocriſie*; but *k Purity* alſo, in oppoſition to *mixture* and *alloy*. And thus we read of the *ſincere milk of the Word*, (*i. e.*) the pure and unmixed parts of it, or the Chriſtian Doctrine as freed from all adulterate mixtures of *Gnoſtick Impurities* and *Jewiſh Obſervances*, which were thoſe compoſitions, wherewith in the Apoſtles times ſo many went about to corrupt the Word of God, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2.

k Thus *ſincerum mel*, is honey without any mixture of wax in it; and *ſincerum* is explained by the Grammarians to ſignifie the ſame as *ſine cera*.

So that to ſerve God *ſincerely* in this ſenſe, is to perform what he commands us *for his ſake*, and with a *deſign to pleaſe him*, without mixing therewith any *by-ends* of our own, or *intending* our own *ſelf intereſts* together with him.

But this we are to underſtand with much reſtriction. For it is not all intention of *Pleaſure*, *Profit*, or other *Intereſt to our ſelves* in the performance of Gods commands which he has forbidden us: We may deſign to advantage our ſelves by our Obedience, and be ſincere ſtill; provided that this deſign be only upon thoſe *ſpiritual* and *eternal advantages which God himſelf promiſes* to the obedient; or upon *temporal ones* ſo far as they *miniſter* to Obedience, and are *ſubordinate* under it. But that *mixture of intention* only is *corrupt* and *unſincere*, when together with our intention of *ſerving God*, we joyn another intention of *ſerving ſin*, or when we deſign ſome *temporal ends* as *much*, or *more* than we do *Gods ſervice*, which makes our *ſelf intereſt*, inſtead of being *ſubſervient* to Obedience, to become fit to *oppoſe* and *undermine* it.

Firſt, I ſay, *God has not forbidden us all intention of our own advantage in the performance of his Commandments.* When he requires us to obey him, he doth not prohibit all Love of our own ſelves, and regard to our own ſelf intereſts; which will appear from all theſe Reaſons, both becauſe *ſome eye at our own good*, and

and reſpect to our own advantage, is of that *nature that it cannot be forbidden us*; becauſe *Gods Laws themſelves have offered and propoſed it to us*; becauſe *the neceſſity of our faith to our obedience ſhews plainly that it cannot be denyed us*; and becauſe *the beſt men that ever were have not been able to obey without it, and yet their obedience has been moſt graciouſly accepted.*

Firſt, Some reſpect to our own good, and intention to advantage our ſelves by our obedience, is of *that nature that it cannot be forbidden us.* It cannot fall under a Law, or be a matter of a Commandment, becauſe it can never be performed.

As for any *one particular* advantage, and ſelf-intereſt indeed, we may deny our ſelves in it, and therefore any Law may very well require it. For we have many particular ſelf-intereſts to ſerve, and they claſh and interfere among themſelves; and ſo long as we are in purſuit of any one, by vertue of it we are able to reſtrain, and deny our ſelves in any other. And thus *all men* daily deny their *Eaſe* for their *Intereſts*, and their *Gain* for their *Liberty*, and their *Liberty* for their *Lives*. And *all good men* daily over-rule that Love which they have for their *Bodies*, by that higher and ſtronger love which they have for their *Souls*, and deny themſelves in any *Temporal* Intereſts, to ſecure their *Eternal*. And becauſe all men have this power of denying their own Self-love in ſmall inſtances, to ſerve it in greater, and of parting with any goods and advantages of this world, to purchaſe to themſelves incomparably better in the next; God has enacted the *denyal of our ſelves, in all ſuch particular Intereſts as hinder our Obedience*, into a Religious Duty, and made it univerſally obliging to all the world.

But

But as for the caſting off this *love of our ſelves*, and *reſpect to our own advantage*, not only as to ſome *particular* intereſts, whilſt our eye is upon others, but as to *all* ſelf-intereſts *whatſoever*; this in the matter of *Duty* and *Obedience*, no *man* can *perform*, and therefore No *Law* can *command* it. For in that Conſtitution of Nature, which God has given us, *ſelf-love* is the *firſt* and *over-ruling Principle*. It has a ſhare *almoſt in all our actions*, and influences *all our faculties*; ſo that in all that variety of operations which flow from us, there are very few wherein we have no eye at our own advantage.

In ſome actions, 'tis true, we are influenced chiefly, and *almoſt* wholly by our *love of others*, which is a *noble* and a *generous Principle*. For there are ſeveral good Offices which we daily do to others, in doing whereof we no way prejudice our ſelves; and theſe our *love of others* makes us perform, and our own *ſelf-love* doth not withſtand it; which is ſeen in all the Offices of *humanity* and *common courteſie*. And other things again there are wherein we advantage them, though it be conſiderably to our own trouble, and our own hindrance; and here, although our own *ſelf-love oppoſe* it ſelf, yet our *love of them prevails* and *over-rules* it; as is daily ſhown in the Offices of *Chriſtian Charity*, and *particular friendſhip*. In theſe Caſes our *love of others* and *of our ſelves* are *ſeparate*; our *kindneſs for them* ſhews it ſelf in ſuch things, wherein our *own ſelf-love* is either *not concerned at all*, or wherein it is *oppoſed* and *over-powered*: ſo that here we are *not influenced* and *governed* by it. And if this were the *Caſe* in all our *obedient actions*, there might be more pretence for *performing* them *purely* out of *love to God*, without mixing therewith any *love of our own ſelves*.

But in *them* quite contrary our *love of God* and *of our*

ſelves are neither *repugnant*, nor ſo much as *ſeparate*; but *moſt cloſely conjoined*. For God hath made the ſame things the matter both of our *Duty*, and of our *intereſt*; ſo that in *ſerving him*, we do in the higheſt meaſure *ſerve our ſelves* too. And in this Caſe, where our own *ſelf-love* is ſo *much concerned*, and has not the *love of God* to *oppoſe* and *over-rule* it, but to *jump* in and *conſpire* with it; it is not poſſible but that we ſhall be *influenced*, and *acted* by it. For it *naturally* iſſues out upon our *own good*, and here it has an *object* in the *higheſt advancement*, and there is nothing to *hinder* or *reſtrain* it. So that whatſoever we may do through a *bare abſtracted love of others*, without any *regard to our own ſelves*, in *thoſe Caſes* where our own *ſelf-love* and *it* are *ſeparate*, or *repugnant*: yet in the *matter of obedience*, where they are ſo *cloſe conjoined*, and Gods ſervice is ſo infinitely our own intereſt; 'tis plain that we cannot be wholly free from it. For ſince in obeying we do that which we know is moſt highly advantageous to us, we are not able perfectly to abſtract our thoughts, but we ſhall intend, whether we will or no, to be advantaged by it.

And ſince no man can wholly abſtain from intending his own advantage in Gods ſervice, no Law can require it. It is no fit matter of a prohibition, nor capable of being retrenched by a Commandment; being it is at no mans choice whether or no he ſhall obſerve it. So that God muſt work a Change in his own Creation, and form us into ſomething different from what we are, before he can in reaſon demand it of us.

2. Some reſpect to our own advantage, in performing what God commands, is lawful and allowable in us; becauſe *Gods Laws themſelves do authorize and propoſe it to us*.

God has not required us to ſerve him for nothing, but

but has offered us an abundant recompence for all our labour, and added ſuch allurements to his Laws as infinitely ſurpaſs all the difficulties of our Duty. He has propoſed every thing to us that may any way work upon our ſelf-love, and care for our own advantage; whether it be the *promiſes of good* to intice, or the threats of evil to affright us into obedience.

For thus ſaith our Law, *Verily, verily,* (I double the Aſſeveration, that you may give the greater credit to it) *I ſay unto you, He that keepeth my ſayings* or Commands, *ſhall never ſee death,* John 8. 51. *To my Sheep* that *follow me,* and *hear* or obey *my voice, I will give eternal life,* John 10. 27, 28. *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, for they ſhall have right to the Tree of Life, and enter in through the Gate into the City,* Rev. 22. 14. But on the other ſide, *The wrath of God cometh upon the Children of diſobedience,* Col. 3. 6. For at the Day of Judgment, *when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with the* Guards and Attendance of his *mighty Angels*; then will he *in flaming fire take vengeance on them that obey not the Goſpel, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord,* 2 Theſſ. 1. 7, 8, 9.

Thus have we in Chriſts Laws, to omit other things, a promiſe made to us of Heaven and endleſs joys, to induce us to obedience; and a threatning of Hell and eternal miſery denounced to us, to make us afraid to diſobey. And theſe make our obedience to become infinitely our greateſt ſelf intereſt, and render it impoſſible for us not to ſerve our own advantage in the higheſt meaſure, if we do obey at all.

And ſince Gods Laws themſelves propoſe ſuch incomparable Arguments, to perſwade us to obedience, they can never forbid us to have an eye to them, or to be excited to obedience by them. For the very end why

God annexes such allurements to his Commands, is, that they may be a *motive* to win our choice, and make us *willing* to obey them. But now our wills are moved by nothing further than they desire it, and intend to purchase it. We cannot be drawn by it longer than we have an eye to it, nor can we endeavour after it further than we design to obtain it. For we must always design the end before we chuse the means, since it is only for the sake and hopes of that, that the trouble of these is undertaken. So that if any thing must be the final cause and encouragement of our endeavour, it must be the matter of our intention and design also. And therefore seeing God himself has placed such infinite advantages and self-interests at the end of our Duty, to perswade and excite us to a willing performance of it; 'tis evident he designs first of all that we should have an eye to them in obeying, because otherwise it is not possible that we should be moved by them.

Nay, so far is God from forbidding all respect to our own advantage, in our obedient performances of his Laws; that

3. In asserting so clearly as he has done the necessity of faith to our obedience, he plainly tells us, that, If we must *obey* at all, it cannot *be denied us*.

Faith is a most necessary Principle of all *natural*, as well as *Gospel service*. For *without faith*, saith S. *Paul*, *it is impossible* for any man, whether he be Heathen or Christian, *to please God*; because *he that cometh to God* in whatsoever Religion, *must believe* thus much of him at least, *that he is*, *and* also *that he is a rewarder of* all *them that seek him*, without an eye whereat no man would ever be perswaded to seek after him, *Heb.* 11. 6. And as for the *belief of the Gospel* in particular, which is the *faith* of us *Christians*; so necessary is it to make us obey the Laws of Christ, that our *obedience*,

ence, as being effected by it, is called the *obedience of faith*, Rom. 16. 26; and *diſobedient men* in the Scripture language are ordinarily ſtyled *unbelievers*; and *diſobedience*, *unbelief*.

But now what is there in our faith ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary to effect this obedience, but our belief, as Saint *Paul* ſays, of *Gods readineſs to reward us*, and of thoſe *advantageous promiſes*, which the Goſpel propoſes to us upon our performance of it? And how is it poſſible for our belief of them to carry us on to obey, further than we concern our ſelves for thoſe things which are promiſed, and intend by ſuch obedience to procure them? The Goſpel indeed has furniſhed us with all manner of *Motives*, if we will *believe* it, without which it is not *poſſible* that we ſhould be moved by it. It tells us of a moſt *ſurpaſſing love* and infinite kindneſs, which God and Chriſt have ſhown to us; and if we believe this, it is fit to raiſe in us a moſt exalted *love*, which will make us *perform* any thing *for their ſakes* out of very *gratitude*. Now this is a moſt *noble* and *ingenuous Principle* of obedience, which although it have *ſomething*, has yet the *leaſt* of *ſelf-love* in it. But it is *weak* and *inſufficient*, unable of *it ſelf* to carry us far, and to bear us through our *whole* Duty. And therefore beſides it, for a perfect ſupply of all our wants, we have in it moreover the *greateſt good* things, and ſuch as we are moſt in love with, *promiſed* to our obedience; and the greateſt evils, ſuch as we moſt fear, *threatned* if we diſobey. And if we believe *theſe*, we muſt take obedience to be our *higheſt*, not *ſervice* only, but *ſelf-intereſt*; and that no *temptation* can either *promiſe* or *threaten* ſo much to our own *ſelf love*, as *God* doth. And this indeed carries us through all, and makes us obey intirely. It overcomes every difficulty, and overballances all contrary inticements. But this it doth only ſo

far

far, as we *intend to purchaſe* all thoſe *ſurpaſſing advantages* by our *obedience*, which infinitely exceed all thoſe *other enticements*, that are attained by men who *diſobey*.

And as this reſpect to our own advantage in our obedient performances is nothing more than the condition of our Nature abſolutely requires, than the neceſſity of Faith ſuppoſes, and than Gods Law it ſelf offers and propoſes to us; ſo neither is it any thing more

4. Than the beſt men have always uſed, who yet were graciouſly accepted upon ſuch obedience. For juſt *Noah* obeyed Gods Law through the *fear* of that deſtruction which it threatned, and with a *deſign* of eſcaping it himſelf, when all the wicked of the World ſhould be overwhelmed in it. *Noah*, ſaith the Text, *was moved with fear to the preparing of his Ark*, as God had commanded, *and to the ſaving of his houſe* thereby. And for that very reaſon, becauſe he *believed Gods threatning*, and was *effectually afraid of it*, he is in that very place called an *Heir of the righteouſneſs which is by faith*, Heb. 11.7. The obedience of *Moſes* is aſcribed in plain words to his *deſign* upon thoſe *rewards* which God had *promiſed*, and which he hoped to compaſs by it. For *he had reſpect*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *to the recompence of reward*, Heb. 11. 26. And to put it beyond all doubt that this *reſpect to our own advantage* in our performance of Gods Laws, is not only the *neceſſity* of *ſome* men, but, as I ſaid before, the very *frame* and *conſtitution* of the *humane nature*: we are told that it was found in it in the *higheſt advancement*, which it either ever *did*, or poſſibly *can* receive; I mean in our Saviour *Chriſt* himſelf. For even of *his obedience*, and of the higeſt inſtance of it, *his death* it ſelf; the Apoſtle aſſures us that it was performed through

through a deſign upon *his own advantage*, as well as upon *that Glory* which would thereby *redound* to *God*. It was, ſays he, *for the* ſake of the *joy that was ſet before him*, that he *endured the Croſs*, *and deſpiſed the ſhame* of it, *Heb.* 12. 2.

Thus upon all theſe accounts it appears, that *the having reſpect to our own advantage in our obedience to Gods Laws*, is not only an *innocent*, but an *abſolutely neceſſary* thing. God can never be offended with it, becauſe the *neceſſity of our nature requires it*, becauſe *his own Laws propoſe it*, becauſe *our faith is made effectual by it*, *and* laſtly *becauſe the beſt men that ever lived have ſtood in need of it, and obeyed through it.*

And ſince ſome reſpect to our own good, and intention of our own advantage in Gods ſervice is ſo plainly lawful; that ſurely muſt be ſuch where the good things which we intend for our ſelves are only thoſe ſpiritual and eternal advantages which his *own Law* has *promiſed to the obedient*, or other *temporal* ones, ſo far as they *miniſter* to *obedience*, and are *ſubordinate* under it.

For the *ſpiritual* and *eternal advantages*, which we are to reap by our obedience, they are *the forgiveneſs of our ſins*, the *peace of Conſcience*, the *aſſiſtance of the Spirit*, and the *joys of Heaven*; together with deliverance from all the contrary evils of *guilt* and *Hell*. And theſe God himſelf has *expreſly promiſed* to us upon our obedience, to *perſwade* us into a performance of it. He uſes them as Arguments to us to gain our *choice*, which they muſt do by actuating our *intention*. He propoſeth them to our *aims*, that they may enliven our endeavours; and annexes them to our obedience for this end, that we may be won to perform it for *their ſakes*, when we ſhould not barely for *its own*. So that it muſt needs be *lawful* for every man to *intend* theſe in Gods ſervice, becauſe

becauſe God himſelf has *propoſed* them *expreſly* in his Laws to every mans *intention*.

And as for the temporal advantages which accrue to us from Gods ſervice, they are *length of days*, and *health of Body*, and *riches*, and *honour*, or *good reputation*; with a freedom from all the oppoſite *evils* of *ſickneſs*, and *death*, and *ſhame*, and *poverty*. And theſe alſo are *promiſed* to the *obedient*. *Let thine heart keep my Commandments*, ſaith Wiſdom; *for length of daies, and long life, and peace ſhall they add unto thee*, Prov. 3. 1, 2. And as *length of days is in her right hand*, ſo *in her left are riches and honour*, ver. 16. *The memory of the juſt ſhall be bleſſed*, when *the name of the wicked ſhall rot*, Prov. 10. 7. *There* neither *is*, nor ſhall be *any want to them that fear the Lord*. For though *the Lions*, that ſeem beſt able to get it, and are moſt careleſs how they come by it, *do lack, and ſuffer hunger*; yet *they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing*, Pſal. 34. 9, 10.

But if there were no expreſs promiſes of theſe temporal advantages propoſed to us upon our obedience in *God's Word*; yet were it enough to warrant our intention of them, that God has annexed them to it in the very *order of things*, and *courſe of Nature*. For according to the ordinary courſe and conſtitution of the World, *Sobriety*, *Juſtice*, *Peaceableneſs*, *Diligence*, and other inſtances of Vertue and Obedience, are naturally fitted to bring down all theſe temporal advantages upon us. And this Courſe of Nature and Order of things, is of Gods eſtabliſhment. It is as much his appointment, as are the promiſes and revelations of his Goſpel. For he is the Authour of the *World*, as well as of the *Bible*. He made the Frame and Order of it to be what now it is, and after he had formed it, *he ſaw that all was very good*, Gen. 1. 31. His *Word* and

Works

Works are both his own, and the *advantages* of Vertue and Obedience in the *one*, are much of *his appointment* as in the *other*.

So that as for our *temporal advantages* alſo, which are much improved and miniſtred to by our obedience, they are ſuch as God has given us for *motives* and *encouragements* in his ſervice. He has ſet before us things *preſent* as well as *future*, to quicken us in our performances of his Commandments, and has appointed us to intend both, becauſe otherwiſe it is not poſſible that we ſhould be quickened, and excited by them.

But the only thing which we are to take care of in this matter, is, that as theſe *temporal advantages* are *eſtabliſhed by God*, whether in the *courſe of Nature*, or in the *expreſs revelations of his Word*, as *motives* and *inducements* to *Obedience*: So we uſe them accordingly, as *helps* and *inſtruments* to enable us to *obey*. We muſt make them *aſſiſtant* and *ſubſervient* to thoſe *Laws*, which they are annexed to; they are to *miniſter* to them, but by no means to *exalt* themſelves *above* them, or to make *againſt* them. For they are offered and authorized by God no further than they make for him; Obedience to his Laws is the chief thing which he intends, and theſe good fruits and advantageous effects of it, are laid only as baits and allurements to excite us on to it. But if once they *loſe* this *ſerviceableneſs* and *ſubordination* to the *doing* of Gods will, they *loſe all* that can *warrant* them, and all the place which he has aſſigned for them; and make our *performance* of Gods Commands to be *no Obedience* to him, nor to give right to any recompence or *reward* from him. For, as I ſaid, then

Secondly, our *intention of our own advantage* in Gods ſervice is *forbidden*, and renders our *obedient performances corrupt* and *unſincere*; when *together with our*

intention of ſerving God, we joyn another intention of ſerving ſin; or when we *deſign* ſome *temporal ends* as *much*, or *more* than we *deſign Gods ſervice*, which makes our *ſelf-intereſt*, inſtead of being *ſubſervient* to obedience, to become fit to *oppoſe* and *undermine* it.

Sometimes, I ſay, *together with their intention of ſerving God, men joyn another intention of ſerving ſin.* And this is done in theſe and the like caſes; (*viz.*) If a man *proſecutes a malefactor*, which is an action agreeable to the command of Juſtice, out of the ſinful end of *ſpite* and *revenge*, as well as out of a purpoſe of *Obedience*. If a *Prieſt* ſhall *take Confeſſions* from women with a deſign of *Luſt*, as well as of *Religion*. If a man ſhall be *temperate* and *ſober*, *chaſte* and *induſtrious*, out of a principle of *covetouſneſs*, as much as out of *Duty*. If he do, as our Saviour tells us the Phariſees did, *make long Prayers*, and other *profeſſions of Religion*, to enable him the better, and without ſuſpicion, to *devour widows houſes*, as well as to *ſerve God*. In *theſe* inſtances, and in all *others* that are *like* unto them, there is a mixture of *light* and *darkneſs*, of *good* and *evil deſign*. Men joyn *God* with *Belial*, and *Obedience* with ſomething of a quite *contrary nature, intending* at once to ſerve both their *Lord*, and their *Sins* too,

But as for their performances which flow from ſuch a *mixture of deſign* as this, they will in no wiſe be owned as an *obedient*, but puniſhed as a ſinful ſervice. For that *evil motive*, which is mixed with the *good*, is ſuch as God has *expreſly threatned*. He has plainly declared that he will damn men eternally for *Revenge*, for *Luſt*, for *Covetouſneſs* and *Rapine*, and for all thoſe *actions* that proceed from them. So that as for ſuch *performances* as ariſe from ſuch *ſinful principles*, they are *judged* already, and the dreadful ſentence is long ago gone out againſt them.

And

And then as for their *mixing* this *damnable deſign of ſin*, with a *deſign of obedience* to God in the ſame action; ſo far is that from *leſſening*, that it is rather an *aggravation* of their *crime*. For it adds to all that *evil*, which it contains within it ſelf, a *prophanation* alſo of what is *holy*, or an *abuſe* of what is *ſacred*; and together with the *ſervice of the ſin*, joyns an *immediate* and *direct affront of God* too.

At other times, I ſay, men *deſign* ſome *temporal ends* for themſelves, as *much*, or *more* than they *deſign Gods ſervice*. And this alſo renders their performances *unſincere*, and qualifies their own *temporal ſelf-intereſts*, inſtead of being *ſubſervient* to *obedience*, to *oppoſe* and *undermine* it.

Their *temporal advantages* they intend ſometimes as *much*, as they do *Gods ſervice*. They make them equal and co-ordinate, and are *moved* by the *one* as much as by the *other*. Their love for the world is as great as their love for God, and they are induced to perform what he commands them, as much for its ſake, as they are for his.

Now this is an indignity which God will by no means endure. For it is plainly an *intolerable degradation* of him, and a bringing him down to nothing more than an *equal amableneſs* with thoſe *earthly pleaſures*, and *temporal intereſts*, which we join in *co-ordination* with him. It is a ſetting up the world for his rival, and making the Creature equal in our eſtimation to him, who is the Creator and Lord of all. But the peremptory words of his Law are,—*Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me*, or in my preſence, *Exod.* 20. 3. He will be ſerved and reſpected *above* all; and to bring other things into competition with him, he looks upon to be the ſame thing as to renounce him. For *he* is *jealous* of the *preheminence* of *his ſervice* above

all *other things*, as a *Husband* is of his *Wives love* to him above all other men; *I the Lord*, ſaith he, *am a jealous God*, Exod. 20. 5.

And ſince *this intending of our temporal advantages equally to Gods ſervice*, is looked upon to be ſo *great* an *affront* and *degradation* of him; the making them *ſuperior* to him, and being won *more* for *their ſakes* than for *his*, muſt do ſo much rather. For this is a ſetting up other things *above* him, and is like *making* and *ſerving* of *another God*. Upon which account, as *ſome* expound it, *Covetouſneſs*, which is a *loving and ſerving of Riches more than God*, is called *Idolatry*, Col. 3. 5.

And when any *Temporal Intereſt* of our own has got as *great* power over us, or *greater* than *God* himſelf has; as it makes *for* the performance of his Command at *one* time; ſo will it at *another* be as ready to make *againſt* it. For although our *Duty* and our *Intereſt* do *ordinarily ſtrike in* together, yet always they do not, but are *ſometimes divided*. And then this hank, which our own advantage has got over us, will not determine us for God, but conteſt with him It will make us neglect his Service, that we may ſerve our ſelves; and carry us on to tranſgreſs his Commands, whenſoever we may thereby promote our own worldly intereſts.

So that the intending to *ſerve our ſins*, together with our intending to *ſerve God*; or the intention of our *own temporal intereſts* in a *degree* either *equal*, or *ſuperior* to our intention of *obedience* to him; by both which ways all *worldly advantages* are qualified to *oppoſe* him: this *mixture of intention*, I ſay, makes our *performance of his Commands* to be no *acceptable obedience*, but an *unſincere ſervice*, and a *damning ſin*.

As for that *unmixedneſs of intention* therefore which is implied in *ſincerity*, and which is *neceſſary to the acceptance of our obedience* of all the forementioned Laws;

it

it excludes not *all intention* of our *own advantage* together with *Gods ſervice*. No, to have reſpect to the *ſpiritual* and *eternal advantages*, which in Gods *Laws* themſelves are expreſly *promiſed* to our *obedience*, is *always lawful*: and to have an eye upon thoſe *temporal advantages*, which will accrue to us by obeying, is *lawful ſo far*, as we intend them, not in a *degree*, either *equal* to *Gods ſervice*, or *ſuperior* to it, by both which ways they are *empowered* to *undermine* it. But then only our *mixing a deſign of our own ſelf-intereſt*, together with our *deſign of ſerving God*, makes our ſervice *unſincere* and our *damning ſin*, when together with our *deſign of ſerving God we join a deſign of ſerving ſin*; or when we *deſign ſome temporal ends of our own* as *much*, or *more* than we *deſign obedience* unto him.

And therefore it is a vain fear wherewith many good people are wont to perplex their ſouls, when they *doubt* of the *ſincerity of their obedience*, becauſe it was performed with an *eye at their own advantage*; through *their fears of Hell*, or *their hopes of Heaven*. For whatſoever ſome, out of a *miſtaken zeal* for *God's honour*, may have ſaid to the contrary; this is not only *innocent*, but, as I have ſhewn, plainly *neceſſary*. If they ſcruple at this, they muſt ſcruple eternally. For it is not their *choice*, but their very *Nature* to act *thus*, and they cannot help it. This, I ſay, is their very *Nature*, and they muſt *leave off* to be *men* before they can *get quit* of it. Men may *ſpeak loftily*, and talk of obeying *purely for God's ſake*, without ſeeking any thing at all for *themſelves*. But this is *mere talk*, and *empty rant*, that can never come *beyond words*, or *appear in action*. For they muſt be made ſomething elſe than what they are, before they can *practiſe* it. If any man doubts then whether God will accept his obedience, becauſe in obeying he had an eye at his own ſelf intereſt; he

doubts

doubts whether God will accept him becauſe he obeys as a man. *Noah*, and *Abraham*, and *Moſes*, nay *Chriſt* himſelf might have doubted at this rate; for in their obedience they all intended their own good as well as *God's Glory*; and had *reſpect* unto the *recompence of reward*. If this be a *ſufficient ground of ſcruple*, every *Chriſtian* man muſt of *neceſſity ſcruple without end*. For all our *obedience* is an obedience of *Faith*; and our Faith or *belief* of *Heaven* and *Hell* makes us *chuſe* to obey, in making us firſt to *intend* by ſuch obedience to *obtain* the *one*, and *eſcape* the *other*. So that either our *own nature*, and *Chriſt's Goſpel* muſt be *changed* into ſomething different from what they are: or we muſt acknowledge that ſuch *honeſt intention* of our own good, as I have mentioned, is *lawful* for us in *God's ſervice*, ſince it is made ſo *neceſſary* and *unavoidable* for us in the *one*, and ſo much *encouraged* by the *other*.

And thus at laſt we ſee what is the firſt requiſite to an acceptable obedience, *viz. ſincerity*. And that it implies both the *reality* of our intention in Gods ſervice, or our performing it truly for Gods ſake, as we pretend to do; and alſo the *uncorruptneſs* of it, or our performing it for his ſake more than for any thing elſe whatſoever, and without regard to any other advantages of our own, than ſuch as are allowed by him, and are ſubordinate under him.

But in regard the *degrees* of our *intention* and *deſign* are not ſo *obvious* and eaſily diſcoverable in themſelves, but are better known to us in their *fruits* and *effects* than in their *own natures*: for the greater eaſe in judging whether we do intend God's Service *moſt* of all or no, I ſhall, before I conclude this Point, lay down a *plain* and *certain* mark, whence any man of common apprehenſion may eaſily diſcern whether he doth indeed deſign God's ſervice *moſt*, and whether his heart and obedience be *ſincere* or no.

And

And the Rule which I ſhall lay down whereby certainly to try and examine that, is this, *If our obedience be intire, it cannot but be ſincere likewiſe.* For he that obeys God in *all times*, and in *all inſtances*, cannot but ſerve him with both theſe *ingredients* of ſincerity, *viz. Truth* and *Prehæminence*. He muſt needs *intend* God's ſervice *really*, and *above all*; who *intends* it ſo, as to *ſerve* him *conſtantly*, and *univerſally*. And the reaſon is this, Becauſe although our *temporal intereſt* and preſent advantage be for *the moſt part* united with Gods ſervice, yet *always* it is not: but *ſometimes* in *all inſtances* of obedience, and at moſt times in *ſome*, it is *ſeparated* and *divided* from it. So that as long as we are true to our own Principle of acting, which we may ſafely conclude we always are, if we either deſign not God's ſervice at all through *hypocriſie*, or deſign it not above all through a *corrupt mixture of intention*; at *thoſe times* when theſe inſtances happen, we ſhall not be acted by the *Command*, but through the *love* of our *own intereſts*, which we intend *really*, and deſign *more*, we ſhall certainly *act againſt* it. For our *actions* go where our *wills* lead them; and our *wills* always follow that which is the *prevailing motive* to them, and has moſt power with them. And therefore if we ſtill chuſe *God's ſervice* in *all* its *parts*, and in *all times*, whether it make *for* our *preſent advantage*, or *againſt* it: we may be aſſured that we *intend* his ſervice *truly*, and alſo that we *intend* it *moſt*; ſince we *ſerve him* when no *bye-intereſts* of our own *can* be ſerved, and *diſſerve* all *other intereſts* for *his ſake*. He muſt needs be our *higheſt aim*; becauſe, where we may *pleaſe* him, though no *ſecular advantages* concur, we chuſe *any thing*; and where he would be *offended*, though *all other advantages* invite, we chuſe *nothing*.

So that in the matter of *obedience*, our *integrity* is the *great*

great and *laſt meaſure* of our *acceptance*. And if upon examination we find that our obedience is *intire*, we need not doubt but that it is *ſincere* alſo.

And this is the very *mark*, from which, according to that verſion of the Pſalms which is uſed in our Liturgy, the Pſalmiſt himſelf concludes concerning the obedience of the *Iſraelites*. For he collects it to have been a *diſſembled* and *unſincere*, becauſe it was not a *whole* and *intire* ſervice. *They did but flatter him with their mouth*, ſaith he, *and diſſembled with him in their tongue; for their heart was not whole* or intire *with him*, Pſal. 78. 36,37.

To clear up this enquiry then, *What qualifications of our obedience* to all the fore-mentioned Laws of God, *muſt render it acceptable to him, and available to our ſalvation at the laſt day*; I ſhall proceed to diſcourſe of the *ſecond* condition of all *acceptable obedience*, viz. *integrity*; of which in the *next* Chapter.

CHAP. II.

Of the ſecond qualification of all acceptable obedience, viz. *integrity*.

The CONTENTS.

Of the ſecond qualification of an acceptable obedience, viz. *integrity. The Notion of integrity or uprightneſs. A three-fold integrity. Of the integrity of our powers and faculties. Or of the obedience with our minds, affections, wills, and bodily powers. How God is to be obeyed with the firſt faculty, our minds or underſtandings. God is to be obeyed with the ſecond faculty, our affections.*

affections. This Queſtion ſtated, How God and his Laws, which are ſpiritual things, are proportionate objects for our love and affections, which are bodily faculties. Of the difference betwixt our love of God, and of the World: that this is more warm and ſenſible; that more laſting and powerful. An account of what meaſures of obedience in our minds and affections, is neceſſary to the acceptance of our ſervice. That contrivances and conſultations for evil things, and ſuch mere apprehenſions as are particularly forbidden, are deadly and damning: but that all other bare apprehenſions; and that all our affections after good or evil things will be rewarded or puniſhed, not merely for themſelves, but only as they are Cauſes and Principles of good or evil choice and practice. God to be obeyed with the third faculty, our wills. He cannot be ſerved without them. Men are guilty of ſin if they chuſe it and conſent to it, though they cannot act it. All this ſervice of our inward faculties is in order to our outward works and operations.

INtegrity of obedience is *ſuch a perfection and compleatneſs of it, as excludes all maimedneſs and defects.* Which is well intimated by S. *James*, when he explains *intire* by *wanting nothing*; *Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and intire*, which you will be by *wanting nothing*, Jam. 1.4.

And this in another word is ordinarily expreſſed in Scripture by *uprightneſs*. For in the moſt common Metaphor of the holy Books, our *courſe of life* is called our *way*; our *actions*, *ſteps*; and our *doing*, *walking*. And, to carry on the Metaphor, our *courſe of obedience*, is called our *right* or *ſtraight path*; our *courſe of ſin and tranſgreſſions*, a *crooked path*; our *committing ſin*, *ſtumbling* and *falling*; and our *doing our duty*, *walking uprightly*.

rightly. So that for a man to be *upright in God's ways*, is, not to *ſtumble or fall by ſin and diſobedience*; *i.e.* to be *perfect* and *intire*, or *wanting nothing in our obedient performances.*

Now this *integrity* or *uprightneſs*, which is neceſſary to our *obedience* that it may ſtand us in ſtead at the laſt Day, is *three fold.*

1. An integrity of our *powers* or *faculties*, which I call an *integrity* of the *Subject.*

2. An integrity of *ſeaſons* and *opportunities*, which is an *integrity* of *Time.*

3. An integrity of the *particular Laws of Duty*, and inſtances of obedience, which is an *integrity* of the *Object.*

And all theſe are neceſſary to render our performance of God's Laws an acceptable ſervice. For if ever we expect that he ſhould reward our obedience at the laſt Day, we muſt take care beforehand that it be the obedience of our *whole man*, in *all times*, to the *whole Law* of God. To begin with it.

1. That our obedience of the forementioned Laws may avail us to life and pardon at the laſt Day, we muſt take care to obey with *all our powers* and *faculties*, which is an *integrity* of the *Subject.* And for this the very Letter of the Law is expreſs. For when the Lawyer asks, *what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life?* Chriſt ſends him to what is written in the Law, and repeats that to him for an Anſwer; *Thou ſhalt love* (and *ſerve*, as it is *Deut.* 11. 13.) *the Lord thy God with all thy heart* or will, *and with all thy ſoul* or affections, *and with all thy ſtrength* or executive and bodily powers, *and with all thy mind* or underſtanding, *Luke* 10. 25, 26, 27, 28. Obedience with all theſe powers and with our whole Nature, is the means of life, and the indiſpenſable condition of our eternal happineſs.

Mark 12. 30.

First,

Firſt, We muſt keep all Gods Commandments with our *minds*, or *underſtanding*. It is a dangerous conceit for any man to phanſie that he may be as *ſinful* as he will in his *thoughts*, ſo long as he only *loves* and *chuſes*, projects and contrives for the forbidden inſtance in his *mind*; but doth not proceed ſo far as to obey it in his *outward practice*. For at the laſt Day we muſt be called to account, and juſtified or condemned by the *counſels* and *imaginations* of our *minds*, as well as by the *works* of our *lives*. For not only the works and practice, but alſo *the thoughts of the wicked*, or of wickedneſs, *are an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 15. 26. *The thought of fooliſhneſs is ſin*, Prov. 24. 9. And ſince *God forbids* and *hates* them; as ever we hope for his favour, we muſt *repent* of them and *forſake* them. *Let the wicked man forſake his thoughts*, ſaith the Prophet, *and turn them* from his ſin *unto the Lord; and* then *he will have mercy* upon him, *and abundantly pardon* him, *Iſai.* 55. 7. For the *warfare* that God has ſet us, after which we are to attain the reward of eternal happineſs, *is a caſting down imaginations*, as the Apoſtle tells us, *and bringing into captivity every* rebellious *thought to the obedience of Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5.

In particular, this obedience of our *minds* to the Law of God muſt be, as a doing what he enjoyns, ſo likewiſe a keeping off from every thing which he forbids.

Firſt, In our *imaginations*. We muſt not *phanſie* it in our minds with love and delight, nor indulge to any thoughts of it with ſuch pleaſure, as may be a bait to our choice, and weaken our averſation and hatred of it, and thereby enſnare, us into the practice of it. *Our warfare*, as we have heard from the Apoſtle, muſt not be againſt *actions* only, but againſt *imaginations* alſo, and *inſnaring phancies* of evil; *caſting down* rebellious

imaginations, and making every thought obedient to the Laws of *Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.*10.4,5. And in the *old world*, when *the imaginations of mens thoughts were always evil, it repented the Lord that he had made man*, inſomuch as he reſolved to deſtroy him, *Gen.*6.5,6,7.

Secondly, In our *counſels* and *contrivances*. We muſt not ſtudy what *means* are *fitteſt*, what *times* are *beſt*, and what *manner* is *moſt advantageous* for the acting of our ſins. They muſt no more have our *care* and *contrivance*, than our *ſervice* and *obedience*. For if we caſt about in our thoughts, and conſult about the moſt commodious way of committing any ſin; although all our deſigns be defeated before we come to any effect, yet ſhall we be damned for our *contrivance*, as well as we ſhould for the *compleat action*. And this our Lord himſelf has plainly determined in *one* inſtance, and the Caſe is the ſame in all the *reſt*. For of the *contrivances* and *machinations of murther* he aſſures us, That they, as well as *murther it ſelf*, are of the number of thoſe things which *pollute* a man, and ſo utterly unfit him for Heaven, where nothing can ever enter that is *polluted* or *unclean*. *Out of the heart*, ſaith he, *proceed evil thoughts* or *a* murtherous machinations, and beſides them, compleat *murthers*, *adulteries*, &c. and *theſe defile the man*, Matth. 15.19.

a διαλογισμοὶ πονηροί. Which being ſet immediately before φόνοι. and the ſins here being reckoned up according to the order of the ten Commandments, determine the wicked machinations to this particular, *viz.* *murtherous* only.

And as for that *particular* ſort of contriving for ſin, which is the height and perfection of villany; *viz.* *the inventing of new*, and before *unknown ways of tranſgreſſing*: it, of all others, is ſure to meet with the ſevereſt puniſhment, and to thruſt men down into the deepeſt Abyſs of Hell. Of this ſort are all *invention of new Oaths*, *new Nick-names or evil ſpeakings*, *new frauds* and *methods of cozenage*, *new incentives of luſt*, *new modes*,

modes of drinking, and arts of intemperance. But of *theſe*, and of all others that are like unto them, God will one day exact a moſt rigorous and terrible account: For *he that deviſeth to do evil*, ſaith *Solomon*, although he himſelf doth not *act*, but only *deviſe* it, *he ſhall be called* and dealt with as a *miſchievous* and wicked *perſon*, Prov. 24. 8. And S. *Pauls* words are full to this purpoſe. For he tells us expreſly, that in the *judgment of God inventers of evil things* ſhall be declared *worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 30, 32.

As for our *minds* or *underſtandings* then, they are one faculty which is plainly implied in the *Integrity* of our ſervice, and without the obedience whereof at the laſt day God will not accept us.

And another faculty implied in it likewiſe is,

Secondly, Our *Soul* or *Affections*. It is a vain thing for any man to love and ſet his heart upon any particular ſin, and yet for all that to expect that God ſhould love and reward him. *If I regard iniquity in my heart*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *the Lord will not hear me*, Pſal. 66. 18. *No man*, as our Saviour ſayes, *can ſerve two maſters; for if he love the one*, for his ſake, when their intereſts enterfere, *he will hate the other:* ſo that *we cannot ſerve God*, if with our affections we continue to *ſerve ſin*, Mat. 6. 24. To pretend obedience to God, and yet to love what he forbids, to make a ſhow of his ſervice, and yet in our very hearts to hanker after his vileſt enemies, whom above all things his ſoul abhors: this ſurely is not *honeſtly* to *ſerve*, but *groſly* to *collogue*, and *flatly to diſſemble* with him. For in very deed, if any man love ſin, he ſides with Gods enemy; but for the ſervice and *fear of the Lord*, *it is to hate evil*, Prov. 8. 13. If ever we expect that God ſhould accept our works, we muſt offer up our affections with them. For if our hearts go along with our luſts, whilſt our pra-

ctice

ctice is againſt them; we ſerve God only againſt our wills; we ſubmit to him as a *ſlave* doth to a *tyrannous* Lord, not through any kindneſs for him, but through a hatefull fear of him. We utterly diſlike what he bids us, but yet we do it, only becauſe we dare not do otherwiſe. But now this is ſuch a way of performing obedience, as God will never endure to accept of. For he ſcorns to be ſerved by a ſlaviſh fear, and an unwilling mind; he will never look upon a heartleſs ſacrifice; but it is the affection that we do it with, which makes him ſet a price upon any thing that we do; and our love that he regards more than our performance. For this is that very thing which was thought fit to be mentioned in the command it ſelf. *Thou ſhalt love The Lord with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind*, Mat. 22. 37.

Tis true indeed, we do not find our *affection* ſo *quick* and *ſenſible* for *God* and *his Laws*, as it uſes to be for the *things of the world*, neither can we reaſonably expect it ſhould. For our affections are *bodily powers*, and it is their very nature, as *Philoſophy* inſtructs us, to be a *vehement ſenſation upon ſome certain commotions of our bodily ſpirits*; ſo that *God* and *his Laws*, which are things *immaterial* and *inſenſible*, are no *proper* and *proportionate object* for them. For it is only *matter*, that is able of it ſelf to *affect matter*; and *material* and *ſenſible objects*, which can excite our *material* and *ſenſitive paſſions* and *appetites*. *One* bodily faculty is no more fit in its own nature to be moved by a ſpiritual object, than *another*: and we may as well expect that our *eye* ſhould *ſee*, or our *fingers handle* it; as that our *affections* ſhould of *themſelves* iſſue out upon it, either to *love*, or *deſire*, or *delight* in it.

So that conſidering things barely in *themſelves*, I ſay, and the *natural agreeableneſs* that is betwixt them, which

is

is the ground of their *natural operations*; it is only *bodily pain* or *pleaſure*, that is *of it ſelf* fit to move our *bodily paſſions*. But as for *ſpiritual* and *inſenſible objects*, ſuch as *God* and *Virtue* are, whatever fitneſs to work upon our *affections* they may have upon *other* accounts, yet in themſelves they have *none*. *Virtue* and *Obedience*, which are *ſpiritual* things, may gain upon our *wills* and *underſtandings*, which are *ſpiritual* and *rational faculties*; but upon our *bodily appetites* and *affections*, for their own ſakes *barely* they never can.

But that which makes our affections to iſſue out upon *God* and *Virtue*, is not the ſpiritual nature of *God* and *Virtue* themſelves; but thoſe *ſenſible* and *bodily* things which *flow* from them, and are *annexed* to them. For although *God* be *immaterial* in *himſelf*, yet infinite are thoſe *material* and *bodily delights* which we receive from him. And although *Virtue* and *Obedience* are in their own natures *ſpiritual* and *inſenſible*, yet exceeding great, and exceeding many are the *ſenſible goods* and pleaſures, that are *annexed* to them. For *Heaven*, and *eternal life*, which are *promiſed* to our *obedience*, will give a *full delight*, not only to our *ſouls* and *ſpirits*, but even to *all* our *ſenſes* likewiſe. It will endleſly entertain our *eyes*, with moſt *ſplendid ſights* and *glorious objects*; it will feaſt our *ears* with *melodious ſongs*, and *moſt raviſhing hallelujahs*, and refreſh our *whole bodies* with a moſt *exalted*, and *everlaſting eaſe* and *pleaſure*. As on the other ſide, *hell*, and *eternal miſery*, which are the *eſtabliſhed puniſhment* of all *ſin* and *diſobedience*, will bring, not only upon our *ſpirits*, but upon our *bodies* too as full a ſcene of moſt *exquiſite pain* and *ſorrow*. For ſo violent and intolerable will the torments of our bodies there be, that God could find nothing too high to ſet them out by, but has expreſſed them by one of the moſt raging and tormenting things in nature, *eternal fire*.

Now

Now as for *Heaven* and *Hell*, they indeed are such things as can of *themselves* stir our *affections* and *bodily passions* with a witness. When they are set before us, they are able to make us *love God* and our *Duty* above all things else, and to *hate* nothing so much as *Sin* and *Disobedience*. For no *Sin* can promise us so much *bodily delight*, as is to be injoyed in *Heaven*; neither can *Obedience* in any *possible* instance expose us to so great *bodily pains*, as the damn'd for ever undergo in *Hell*. So that when once *Heaven* and *Hell* are *proposed* to our *affections*, and act upon them, they will prevail with them more than any thing else can, and make nothing so *dear* to them as the *performance of their duty*, nor any thing so *hatefull* as the *transgression* of it.

And thus may *God* and *Virtue* become a fit object even of our *bodily passions*, and a most *cogent* matter of *love*, *desire* and *joy*; as on the contrary, *sin* and *wickedness* are of *sorrow*, *flight* and *hatred*. They are most powerfull to excite all these *affections*, although not in their *bare spiritual selves*, yet in their *bodily dependants*, and *annexed consequences*. For the *greatest bodily joys* shall one day crown our *Obedience*, and the *acutest bodily torments* will certainly befall us if we *disobey*. And these, although as yet they are at a *distance*, and *future* to us, are most fit to work upon us, and most strongly to affect us. For we are Creatures endowed with understanding, and have Reason given to us to set future things before us, and to think our selves into passions and affections, and not to be *idle* and altogether *passive*, like the brute and unreasonable Creatures, and suffer the bare force of *outward* and *present* objects to excite them in us: So that with our *bodily affections* we may *love*, and *delight* in *God* and *Religion*, which are *spiritual* things, because of their *bodily joys* and *attendancies*; and *sensibly hate* and *grieve* at our sins and disobedience,

diſobedience, which are *moral* and *immaterial* evils, becauſe of their *ſenſible* pains and puniſhment. And we may *love* the *one*, and *hate* the *other above* all things elſe, becauſe no *bodily joys* are in any the leaſt compariſon *ſo* great, as thoſe which are laid up for the *good* in *Heaven*, nor any *bodily* pains *ſo* tormenting, as thoſe which are prepared for the damn'd in *Hell*. And ſince God has given to our *bodily affections* even in their *own way*, the *greateſt motives* to *love him above all*, and *above* all things to *hate ſin*, it is the higheſt Reaſon that he ſhould require it of us, and demand the *preeminent ſervice*, not only of our *ſpirits*, but alſo of our *lower ſoul* or *affections* alſo.

But although our *bodily affections*, when they are employed about *Vice* and *Virtue*, which are *ſpiritual* things, by reaſon of this *ſupereminence* of *ſenſitive* rewards in the *one*, and puniſhments in the *other*, be more *ſtrong* and *powerful*, yet are they not, as I ſaid, ſo *warm* and *ſenſible* as they uſe to be, when they iſſue out upon *ſenſible* and *bodily objects*. We *feel one* in our own ſouls, and are affected in them much more violently, than we are in the *other*. And that it muſt needs be ſo is plain: For our affections for *worldly* things are raiſed in us by the *things themſelves*, and by thoſe impreſſions which they make upon us; and they act to the *higheſt*, and according to the *utmoſt* of their power. But our *affections* for *ſpiritual* things are to be raiſed in us by our own *Reaſon*, we are to argue and think our ſelves up to them; and our thoughts are *free*, and go no further than we pleaſe to ſuffer them. And indeed we find ſo much difficulty in fixing them upon any thing, and there are ſo many other things obtruding daily upon them, to divert and call them off from theſe; that we ſeldom ſtay ſo long upon them, or are ſo well acquainted with them, as to be wrought up into a ve-

ry *warm* and *inflamed* affection for them.

Beſides, what is the chief Reaſon of all, that *Good* and *Evil* in *worldly* things which *affects* us is *preſent* with us, and therefore our paſſions *for*, or *againſt* them, are raiſed in us by our *ſenſe* and *feeling*. But as for *ſpiritual* things, and thoſe *bodily* joys and ſorrows that are *annexed* to them, for the *ſake* whereof we are *ſenſibly affected* with them; they are not preſent with us, but future and at a diſtance; and therefore our paſſion for them cannot be raiſed by our *ſenſe*, whoſe object are only *preſent* things, but meerly by our *fancy* and *imagination*. But now as for the *ſenſible warmth* and violence of a *paſſion*, it is nothing near ſo *quick* when it is excited by *fancy*, as when it is produced by *ſenſe*. For no man is ſo *feelingly affected* with *hearing* a ſad ſtory, as he would be by *ſeeing* of it. A man will be moved abundantly leſs by *imagining* a *battle*, a *murder*, or any other dreadful thing, than by *beholding* it: And the reaſon is, becauſe the impreſſions upon our *ſenſe* are *quick* and *violent*, and their *warmth* is communicated to our *affections* which are raiſed by them: whereas our *imaginations* are *calm* and *faint* in compariſon, and the *paſſions* which flow from them partake of their *temper*, and are more *cold* and leſs *perceptible*: So that our paſſions for *worldly* things being paſſions upon *ſenſe*, and our paſſions for things *ſpiritual* with their *bodily* pain or pleaſure annexed, being only upon *fancy* and *imagination*; we muſt needs be more *warmly* and *ſenſibly*, although not more powerfully, affected with the things of *this* world, than of the *other*.

But that which is to diſtinguiſh our *paſſion for God and Virtue above* all things elſe, from our paſſion for *worldly* things, is not the *warmth* and *ſenſibleneſs*, but the *power* and *continuance* of it. For it muſt be a *prevalent* affection, which doth more ſervice, although it make

make leſs noiſe. It muſt be ſuch a ſetled and *overpowering* Love, anſwerable to the *prevailing ſtrength*, and *ſurpaſſing greatneſs* of its *motive*, as gets the *upper hand* in *competition*, and makes us, when we muſt *deſpiſe* one, to diſregard all things elſe, and to adhere to Gods ſervice, what other things ſoever be loſt by it: What it wants in *warmth*, it has in *permanency* and *power*; it ſticks faſter to us, and can do more with us than our love of any thing beſides. For in our affections we muſt needs *prefer God* and *his ſervice before* every other thing when they ſtand in competition; or we have none of that *Love with the whole ſoul*, which the Commandment requires of us; as will be ſhewn more fully * afterwards.

* Chap. 8.

And becauſe our *thoughts* and *affections* have in them a great latitude, and in a matter of ſo high concern, every good ſoul will be inquiſitive after ſome determinate accounts of that *compaſs* and *degree* of them, which is neceſſary to our acceptance: Before I conclude this Point, I will ſet down what meaſures of obedience in theſe two faculties, what *thoughts* and *imaginations* of our *minds*, and what *degrees* of *love* and *delight* in our *affections*, ſhall be judged ſufficient at the laſt Day to *ſave* or to *deſtroy* us.

As for our *thoughts*, there is one more *elaborate* and *perfect* ſort of them, *viz.* our *counſels* and *contrivances*. And when they are employed about the compaſſing of forbidden things, they are our *ſin*, and, without *repentance*, will certainly prove our *condemnation*. For *he that deviſeth to do evil*, ſaith *Solomon*, *he ſhall be called* and dealt with as *a miſchievus perſon*, Prov. 24. 8. The *machinations of murther* are joined in *guilt* and *puniſhment* with *murtherous* actions themſelves, *Matth.* 15.19. And as for that particular ſort of Contrivers, the *inventers* of *evil things*, they are pronounced by S. *Paul* to

be *worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 30, 32.

And as for other of our thoughts which are not come up to the height of a *contrivance* or *conſultation*, but are only *ſimple* apprehenſions; ſome of them alſo are *properly* and *directly good* or *evil*, and an *Article* of our *life* or *death*. God has impoſed ſeveral Laws, which he has backed both with threats and promiſes, upon our very thoughts themſelves. Of which ſort there are ſome to be met with under all the three *general* Parts of Duty, *viz.* to *God*, our *Neighbour*, and our *ſelves*. For our thoughts of *God* are bound up by the Law of *honour*, which forbids us to leſſen or prophane him by *diſhonourable Notions* and Opinions; our thoughts of our *Neighbour* by the Laws of *Charity* and *Candour*, which ſuffer us not either to reproach or injure him by *undervaluing Ideas*, or *groundleſs ſuſpicions*; and our thoughts of our own *ſelves* by the Law of *humility*, which prohibits us to be exalted in our own conceits through *falſe* and *over-high apprehenſions* of our *own excellence*. *Pious* and *charitable opinions* both of *God* and *men*; and *humble* and *lowly conceits* of our *own ſelves*, are Duties incumbent upon our very *minds* themſelves. And all the *oppoſite* vices of *impious* and *reproachful Ideas of God*; of *cenſorious*, *ſuſpicious*, and *leſſening thoughts of other men*; and of *proud* and *arrogant conceits of our own worth*; are tranſgreſſions within the ſphere and compaſs even of our *underſtandings*. For the exerciſe of the *firſt* is not only a *Cauſe* and *Principle*, but a *part* and *inſtance* alſo of *obedience*, and an Article of *life*: as the exerciſe of the other is an *inſtance* of *diſobedience*, and an *Article* alſo of *damnation*.

As for theſe Inſtances then, of *bare thought* and *naked apprehenſion*, they are *eſſential parts* and *neceſſary inſtances* of an *acceptable obedience*; and the *wilful tranſgreſſion* of any one of them, without *repentance*, is *dangerous* and *damning*.

So

So that as for all our *perfected* and *ſtudied thoughts of evil*, viz. our *counſels* and *contrivances*; and as for all *ſuch ſimple thoughts* and *mere apprehenſions*, as have *particular Laws* impoſed upon them, they are not only *principles*, but *parts* and *inſtances* of *diſobedience*; and if we are *guilty* of them, unleſs we retract them by *repentance*, we ſhall be *condemned* for them.

But then there are ſeveral other *bare imaginations* and *ſimple apprehenſions*, which are not under any of *theſe* particular Laws, that are impoſed upon our thoughts themſelves, but are employed upon things commanded or forbidden by any of the other Laws forementioned. And as for all *theſe* apprehenſions, in themſelves they are neither *ſin* nor *Duty*, nor a matter either of *reward* or *puniſhment*; but ſo far only as they are *cauſes* and *principles* either of a *ſinful* or *obedient choice*, or *practice* of thoſe good or evil things, which they are employed upon.

In *themſelves*, I ſay, theſe *mere apprehenſions* are neither *ſin* nor *Duty*. We may *perceive* ſin in our *minds*, and have it in a thought or notion, without ever being guilty of it, or liable to anſwer for it. For the *Sun ſhines* upon a *Dunghil* without being *defiled* by it: and *God ſees* all the *wickedneſs* in *Hell*, but is not *tainted* with it. And ſo long as we ſojourn in a World of *iniquity*, every good man muſt needs know and behold all the vices of the Earth; but bare underſtanding of them doth not make him partake with them, or ſubject to be puniſhed for them.

But to make theſe *mere apprehenſions* and *imaginations* either of *good* or *evil* an inſtance of *obedience* or *diſobedience*; they muſt be * *cauſes* and *principles* of an *obedient* or *diſobedient choice* or *practice*. For our *inward thoughts* and *imaginations* are *Springs* and *Principles* both of our *inward choice*, and alſo of our *outward opera-*

* See this ſtated *Lib.* 5. *Cap.* 4.

operations. And the ſervice which God requires of them is the ſervice of the *principle*. He demands the obedience of our *minds* as a *means*, and in order to a further obedience of our hearts and actions. He expects that we ſhould think ſo *long* and ſo *often* upon the *abſoluteneſs* of his *authority*, the *kindneſs* of his *Nature*, the *reaſonableneſs* of his *Commands*, the *glory* of his *rewards*, and the *terrour* of his *puniſhments*; till in our hearts we chuſe thoſe things which he has commanded, and *perform* them in our *works* and *practice*. For our *thoughts* of *him*, and of his *Laws*, are not in *themſelves Obedience*, but only a *Spring* and *Principle* of it, and a *good ſtep* and *degree* towards it. Our *knowledge* ſhall be judged an acceptable ſervice as it carries us on to *performance*, but no otherwiſe. For *hereby alone*, ſays S. *John*, *we know that we know him* with ſuch knowledge as ſhall be accepted by him, *if we keep his Commandments*, 1 John 2. 3. And on the other ſide, our *bare imaginations* and *apprehenſions* of ſome *forbidden ſin* are then only *diſobedient*, when they carry us on to *chuſe* or *practiſe* thoſe things that are *ſinful*. We muſt go on from *thought*, to *choice*, or *practice*, before the *vices thought* of become our own, and our *apprehenſions* of ſin become themſelves *ſinful*. For the *thoughts of ſin* have the *ſinfulneſs* of *means* and *cauſes*; they are ſinful ſo *far* as they help on either our *conſent*, or *performance*. So our Saviour has determined in *one* inſtance, *viz.* that of *luſtful looks* and *apprehenſions*, Matth. 5. *He that looks upon a woman* ſo long as *to luſt after her*, or to conſent in his heart to the enjoyment of her, *he hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart*, v. 28.

As for our *thoughts* and *imaginations* then, we ſee what *obedience* in them is required to our *acceptance*, and when they are *diſobedient* and will *deſtroy* us. For our

our *counſels* and *contrivances of evil* are *always ſinful*; and ſo are all ſuch *ſimple thoughts* and *apprehenſions*, as have *particular* Laws impoſed upon them. And as for our *imaginations* and *apprehenſions* of things *commanded* or *forbidden* by any *other* Laws; they are *imperfect* things, and not fully grown up to the *perfect* Stature either of *obedience* or of *diſobedience*; So that they are neither *puniſhed*, nor *rewarded* in *themſelves*; but ſo far only as they are *cauſes* and *principles* of an *obedient*, or *diſobedient choice* or *actions*.

And then as for our *affections*, their meaſures are the very ſame with thoſe already mentioned, of our *bare imaginations* and *ſimple apprehenſions*. For their *ſervice* and *obedience* is that of the *principle*, and their Sentence ſhall be according to thoſe *effects*, either in our *wills* or *practice*, which *flow* from it.

If we *love* and *deſire obedience*, ſo far as to *chuſe* and *act* it; this *degree* of *affection* will gain us God's *love* and *favour*, and ſecure his *rewards*; but leſs than it no other ſhall. *He that keeps my Commandments*, ſaith Chriſt, *he it is that loveth me, and they* only *who* ſo *love me* in obeying me, *ſhall be beloved* again *of my Father, and I will love them*, Joh. 14. 15, 21.

But if our love and deſire of evil things carry us on to * *chuſe*, or *act* any inſtance of *diſobedience*, for the ſake of that which is *loved* and *deſired*; then are our *affections ſinful*, and ſuch as will *deſtroy* us. The *deſire* of *evil* is not ſo truly the *ſtate* of *mortal ſin*, as of *dangerous temptation*, it is not *deadly* in it *ſelf*, but *kills* by *carrying* us on to a *ſinful* and *deadly choice* and *actions*. For when once it has got to that *degree*, it is *obnoxious* to a *dreadful Sentence*. Whereof the Pſalmiſt gives us one inſtance in the *love of violence*. *Him that loveth violence, the ſoul of the Lord hateth*, Pſal. 11. 5. And S. *John* ſays the ſame of the *love of lying*, and the Caſe is *alike*

* See this ſtated Book 5. Chap. 4.

alike in every other ſin. *Without*, in outer darkneſs, *are murtherers, and whatſoever loveth or maketh a lye*, Rev. 22. 15.

And thus we ſee what *meaſure* of *obedience* is required in theſe *two* faculties, and what *kinds*, and *degrees* of *thoughts*, and *affections*, are to be *uſed*, or *reſtrained* to make *theirs* an *acceptable Service*. For we muſt *abſtain* from all *evil counſels* and *contrivances*; from all *ſimple apprehenſions*, which are *particularly forbidden*, and put in *uſe* all ſuch as are *particularly enjoined*: and as for all other our *bare thoughts* and *imaginations*, and all our *affections* and *deſires*, we muſt *fix* them upon our *Duty* ſo long, till they make us *perform* it; and never ſuffer them to iſſue out upon *evil* ſo *far*, till they carry us on either to *chuſe*, or *practiſe* it.

But beſides theſe *two* faculties, *viz.* our *minds* and *affections*, there is yet another whoſe ſervice is neceſſary to render ours an acceptable obedience; and that is,

Thirdly, Our *hearts* or *wills* alſo.

It is an abſurd Dream for any man to think of ſerving God without his *will*, becauſe without that none of his actions can be called his own. For that only is imputed to us, which is choſen by us, and which it was in the power of our own wills, either to promote, or hinder; no man *deſerving praiſe*, or being *liable to anſwer* for what he could *not* help. But of all perſons *God* moſt of all regards our hearts in all our performances. He perfectly *diſcerns* them, and he *eſtimates* our *ſervices* according to them. So that it is not poſſible for any of us to obey him *unwillingly*, in regard the choice of our *will* and *heart* it ſelf is that which renders any action a *ſaving*, and *acceptable obedience*. For *out of the heart*, as *Solomon* ſaith, *proceed the iſſues of life*, Prov. 4. 23.

The *choice* then, as well as the *practice* of our *Duty*,

is

is plainly neceſſary to render it *available* to our *ſalvation*. But on the other ſide if we *chuſe ſin*, although we miſs of opportunity to *act* it, the bare *choice*, without the *practice*, is *ſufficient* to our *condemnation*. For even by *that*, when we proceed no *further*, our *heart* has gone *aſtray* from God, and we are *polluted* by the ſin which we reſolve upon in our own *choice*; ſince *out of the heart*, as our Saviour tells us, *proceeds the pollution of the man*, Matth. 15. 16, 20. We may *commit* all ſort of tranſgreſſions, and *incurr* the puniſhment of them, merely by *conſenting* to them inwardly in our *hearts*, without ever compleating them in our *outward operation*. For our Lord himſelf has thus determined it in one inſtance, and the Caſe is the ſame in all the reſt. *Whoſoever looks upon a woman to luſt after her*, or ſo long till his heart conſent to commit lewdneſs with her if he could, *he*, though he never meet with an [e] opportunity to *act* it, or before any, *hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*. Matth. 5. 28.

[e] *Cum ab homine mala res ſolâ neceſſitate non agitur, ipſa rei turpis cupiditas pro actione damnatur*, Salvian de Prov. l. 6. p. 205. Ed. Oxon.

No man then may venture to *will* and *chuſe* any *one ſin*, and yet preſume he is *innocent*. For if *fear*, or *ſhame*, or *intereſt*, or other *bye-motive* and *worldly* end, or *want of opportunity*, hinder him from the *outward acting* and *compleating* of his *ſin*; yet if his *heart* ſtands for it, and all the while he *wills* and *chuſes* it, he is *guilty* in the Accounts of God as if he had *committed* it. We diſobey in *willing* as well as in *doing*, and ſhall ſuffer for a wicked *choice*, as well as for a wicked *practice*. So that as ever we hope to have our *obedience* to the forementioned Laws avail us unto *life* and *pardon* at the laſt Day, we muſt take care to perform it, as with our *minds* and *affections*, ſo with our *hearts* or *wills* likewiſe.

As for theſe *three* faculties therefore, *viz.* our *minds*,

our *wills*, and our *affections*; they must necessarily be devoted to God's service, to make up an *intire* obedience. As ever we hope for *Heaven*, we must employ our minds upon *God* and his *Laws* so far at least, till we *love* them in our *souls*, and *chuse* them in our *hearts*, with full purpose and resolution of performing them. Our *understandings* must consider of our *duty*, and of the *motives* to obedience so *long* and so *well*, till our *affections* are inflamed with a desire of it, and our *wills* are firmly resolved upon it. And as ever we expect to escape the torments of *Hell*, we must take care that we entertain no *thoughts* or *desires* of any *sin* so *long*, till in our *hearts* we become *concerned* for it, and *willing* to fulfil it. But if we will *look* on it, it must be in order to *loath* and *disdain* it. We must consider how *disingenuous*, how *shameful*, and how *mischievous* a thing it is; and indulge to no apprehensions of it in our *minds*, that are like to insnare either our *choice*, or *practice*; nor *dwell upon* any, but those that are apt to kindle our *indignation* and *zeal* against it, and arm our *wills* with full *purpose* to overcome it.

This must be the use and exercise of all our inward *powers*, and *principles* of action. They must be used as instruments of *good life*, and made the great *Springs* and *productive* Causes of all vertuous *practice* and *obedience*. It is this *holy* and *obedient practice* that is the *end*, whereto all these *obedient thoughts*, *desires* and *resolutions* are directed; so that if they fall short of this, they miss of their chief effect, and appear to be *weak* and *idle* things, that are *insignificant* and *useless*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Obedience with the fourth faculty, viz. *our executive or bodily powers, and outward operations.*

The CONTENTS.

God is to be obeyed with the fourth faculty, viz. *our executive or bodily powers, and outward operations. The great difficulty of Obedience in this inſtance. Four falſe grounds whereupon men ſhift off the neceſſity of this ſervice with their works and actions. Firſt, A hope to be ſaved for a true belief or orthodox opinions. Mens confidence in this repreſented. The folly of it. Orthodox faith and profeſſions no further available, than they produce obedient works and actions. Secondly, A hope of ſalvation upon an obedience of idle deſires and ineffective wiſhes. An opinion of ſome Caſuiſts, That a deſire of Grace is Grace, refuted. This ſtated, and a diſtinct explication of what is promiſed to the deſire of Obedience, and what to Obedience it ſelf. The pretence for this acceptance of idle deſires from* Gal. 5.17. *conſidered. An account when the will and deſire is taken for the deed and performance. That Text* 2 Cor. 8. 11, 12. *plainly vindicated. Thirdly, A hope of being ſaved notwithſtanding they do ſin, becauſe they are inſnared into it through the ſtrength of temptations. The folly of this. Our own luſts make temptations ſtrong. The Grace of the Goſpel is ſufficient to overcome them. Fourthly, A hope of being excuſed becauſe they tranſgreſs with an unwilling mind. Theſe mens ſtate repreſented. Unwillingneſs in ſin a*

mitigation, but no ſufficient excuſe. Some ſtruggling in moſt actions both of good and bad men. The ſtrife of the Fleſh and Spirit. Two ſorts of men feel nothing of it, viz. *the Saints in Heaven after the Reſurrection, and ſome profligate ſinners here now on Earth. All good men, and the generality of evil are ſubject to it in this life. Mens peremptory will and laſt choice determines their condition.*

A *Fourth* faculty that is indiſpenſably neceſſary to the *integrity* of our Obedience, and which is the chief *end* and *perfection*, and gets acceptance for all the reſt, is our *ſtrength*, or *bodily* and *executive powers*.

For the completion and crown of all, we muſt *do* as well as *think* and *deſire*, and our obedient *choice* muſt end in an obedient *practice*. For all our *inward* motions are in order to *outward* operations, they muſt go on to good effects, before they are fit for the great reward; we muſt *work* as well as *deſire*, and not only *will*, but *do* our *duty*, becauſe upon nothing leſs than that we ſhall at the laſt day be accepted.

This indeed is the *ſevere* ſervice, and the *diſtaſtfull* part of duty. It is a matter of much *labour* and *pains*, of much *ſtrife* and *contention*. For *the doing of our Duty* is the *top* of all, every hinderance muſt be removed, and every difficulty overcome before we can attain to it. Our *ſcruples* and *gainſaying reaſonings* muſt be *ſilenced*, our *diſcouraging fears* quieted, and all our *repugnant deſires cooled*, or *conquered*: Every *doubt* of our *minds* muſt be *ſolved*, and every *hoſtile luſt ſubdued* e're we can *act* what we are *required*. A *ſecret wiſh*, or a *ſudden deſire* of Obedience may ſtart up in our ſouls *unawares*, and there is not much oppoſition made to it, becauſe our luſts receive no great hurt from it. For the pleaſure of our luſts lies in *acting* and *fulfilling* them,

them, they are ſecure of their own delights, ſo long as they are of our practice. And therefore they will allow us to *think* of *good*, to ſpend a *faint wiſh*, a *ſudden inclination*, or a *fruitleſs deſire* upon it, But if once we would go on to *do* our *Duty*, and to *work Obedience*, then begins the conflict. Our Luſts then beſtir themſelves with *might* and *main*, and ſet every *faculty* a work to *reſiſt*, and *defeat* it. For our *thoughts* begin to *argue*, and to *pick quarrels* with our *Duty*. They ſuggeſt all its *difficulties*, and *dammages*. They repreſent all the *pains* of the undertaking, to *cool* our *love*; the *appendant dangers*, to *raiſe* our *fears*; and the *great hazards*, to *ſhake* our *hopes*, and make us *deſpair* of *ſucceſs*. For the ſake of our *ſins* we *arm* all *diſcouraging paſſions*, and quite *ſtifle* all the *obedient ſuggeſtions* of our *conſciences*. For either we *ſoften* our *ſin* by *excuſes*, or *juſtifie* it by *arguments*, or *overlook* it by *ignorauce*, *heedleſs inconſideration* and *forgetfulneſs*. Either we will *act* it *raſhly* through the power of a ſtrong luſt, and not *conſider* it at all, or elſe *think* of it only to *leſſen* or *defend* it. And when by the oppoſition of our *Luſts* to the *perfecting* and *performing* of our *Duty*, our *ſpiritual ſtrengths* are thus *weakned*, and our *luſts advanced*, when our *paſſions riſe*, and our *minds plead* againſt it: *then* is the *ſtriſe*, and *there's* the *toil* and *difficulty* of *obedience*.

And becauſe in this *obedience of our works and actions* there is ſo much *difficulty*, therefore are moſt people ſo deſirous to *ſhift* it off, and ſo forward to take up with any thing, which will *ſave* them the *labour* of it. They perſwade themſelves that God will admit of eaſier *terms*, and build their *hopes* upon *cheaper ſervices*; in particular upon theſe *Four*:

Firſt, A *true belief*, or *orthodox opinions*.

Secondly, An obedience of *idle deſires*, and *ineffective wiſhes*

And

And if for all theſe they continue ſtill to *do* what *God forbids*, and to *work* diſobedience; then their hope is to be ſaved notwithſtanding it, becauſe

Thirdly, Their *falling is* through the power of a *great* and *overpowering temptation*, which they *ſee* and *reſiſt*, but *cannot prevail over*. So that

Fourthly, Their *tranſgreſſion* is with *reluctance* and *unwillingneſs*, their *ſervice of Sin* is an *unwilling*, and a *ſlaviſh ſervice*.

1. The *firſt* falſe ground, whereby men elude all the neceſſity of ſerving God, with their *ſtrength* or *executive powers*, in *outward works* and *operations*, is their confidence of being ſaved for a *true belief*, or a *right knowledge in religious matters*, and *orthodox opinions*. They turn all *Religion* into a matter of *ſtudy* and *ſpeculation*, as if it required only a *good head*, and a *diſcerning judgment*. They make it a matter of *skill*, but not of *practice*; an *exerciſe* of *wit* and *parts*, but not a *rule* of *action*. For the *faith* which they expect ſhould *ſave* them, with ſome men goes no further than the *mind*, and conſiſts barely in *right notions* and *apprehenſions*. They take it to be nothing more but an *underſtanding what Chriſt has ſaid*, a being able to *reaſon upon it*, and to *argue for it*, and in their own *minds approving* and *conſenting* to it. And that not to all that Chriſt has revealed neither. For the *Precepts* or *Commands* it *overlooks*, and doth not meddle with; the *threatnings* it either *conſiders not* at all, or if it do, it takes them not to be due to that whereunto God has fixed them, (*viz.*) *diſobedience of practice*, but only to *ignorance* and *unbelief*. But all that which their faith *eyes*, and which their minds *ſolely*, or at leaſt *principally* approve of, is the *hiſtorical paſſages* of *Chriſts life and death*, the *doctrinal points* which he has told us *concerning God* or *himſelf*, and the *comfortable promiſes* of

of the *Gospel*. They believe that *Christ* is, what he has *done* and *suffered* for us, and what he has *promised* to us: they *think right* in all the *Religious Controversies* that are on foot in the world, *joyning* themselves with the *Orthodox men*, and *siding*, as they presume, with the true Opinion; they *profess Christs Religion*, and are *Members* of his *Church*, and *adhere* to the *right party* of *Christians*, and to the *purest Congregation*, and that they conclude is enough to bring them to *Heaven*.

But if any think, as, God be praised, many do, that God requires more than the bare service of our *minds* and *right apprehensions*; yet even a great part of them fancy, that all which he requires besides, is only the *obedience* of their *tongues* and *discourses*. If they *believe* with the *mind*, and *confess* with the *mouth*, although they are *rebellious* and *reprobate in their practice*, they are *satisfied* of their *Godly estate*, and presume that God is so too. Their Religion is made up of *lip service*, for they think to content God by *heavenly talk*, and *pious conference*, by larding all their discourses with the *Name of God*, and *shreds of Scripture*; all their *conversation* is *holy phrase*, and *sanctified form* of speaking; and this they hope will atone for all the *lewdness* and *disobedience* of their *lives* and *actions*.

And if they proceed yet further to a *Faith* that reacheth beyond the *mind* and the *tongue*, and think it necessary that it sink down from the *head* into the *heart*; yet there they will allow God to expect no great matters. They hope he will be well pleased, although it summon not up all our *Affections* for his service, if it produce in us these *two easie* passions, which are raised without much adoe, and may well be spared, (*viz.*) a *strong confidence*, and a *warm zeal*. If to make it *saving* it must imply a joynt concurrence of our *Affections*,

fections, it ſhall be only of theſe *two*. It ſhall add *hope* to *knowledge*, and be a *belief that God will ſave ſinners*, with a *ſpecial hope*, and *fancifull confidence* that he will in *particular* ſave them. It ſhall add *Zeal* to *Orthodoxy*, a warm heart to a ſound head, and be no more but a *maintaining* of, and *ſtickling for right opinions*, and *againſt erroneous* and *falſe* ones, with *heat* and *fierceneſs*.

Thus do men delude themſelves into great confidences, and vain expectations, from a *faith* that is *without fruit*, from an *orthodox*, but *empty knowledge*, which is void of all *obedient practice*.

But a *knowledge* and *belief* which is not more *comprehenſive* in its *nature*, nor has other *effects* than theſe; they will find to their coſt in the event of things, is miſerably *deluſive* and *vain*. It will ſerve to no other end but the *heightning* of their *crimes*, and the *encreaſing* of their *condemnation*. For do but conſider:

If we will *believe* and *underſtand* Chriſts *Doctrines* and his *Promiſes*, but *overlook*, or *deny* his *Laws* and *Precepts*; what is this, but inſtead of *honour* and *ſervice*, to *affront* and *renounce* him? By picking and chooſing at this rate, we caſt off his power of molding for us a Religion, and fixing the terms of his own mercy, and make to our ſelves a condition of our own ſalvation. We follow him ſo far only as we pleaſe our ſelves, but no further. The compaſs of our belief it ſelf is not bounded by his authority, or meaſured according to *his* mind, but *our own*. For we underſtand and aſſent, not to every thing that *he* has *ſaid*, but only to what *we* our ſelves *like*. We refuſe to take every thing upon his word, and credit him in what he ſpeaks no longer than it agrees with us. If we believe him, it is only where we matter not whether what he ſayes be true or no; but we either give no heed to him, or flatly

flatly disbelieve him where we have any temptation. His *veracity* and *truth* it ſelf has no power over our very *minds*, beyond what our own *luſts*, and *beloved ſins* will *ſuffer* it: but the *Devil* and the *World* muſt be ſerved in the *firſt* place by our *Opinions*, and *God* muſt be forced to take up with their leavings.

Nay what is yet more, by ſuch a *partial* and *ſqueamiſh belief* as this, we do not only give or take, at our *own liking*, from that attribute of his, which in *believing* we would be thought to honour, *viz.* his *Truth*: but even where we ſeem to *ſubmit* to it, we *wrong* and pervert it. For we *wreſt* his *ſenſe*, and *ſpoil* his meaning, and *undermine* all that he *intends*: So that even that which we do believe is not *his* mind, but our *own*. For the true meaning of his *Promiſes*, which run all upon condition of our *Obedience*, we pervert; the force of all his *threatnings*, which denounce *woes* to *every* ſin and tranſgreſſion, we *cancel*. We do as much, as in us lies, to *corrupt* his Word, and to *belie* his very *Goſpel*. We make his whole Religion ſignifie another thing than what he intended. For we make it *allow*, what he *forbids*; and *encourage* ſuch, as he *threatens*; and *ſave* thoſe, whom at the day of Judgment he will *condemn*. And ſince this *perverſe faith* and *knowledge*, which *believes* what it *likes*, and is *infidel* to all the *reſt*; which ſets up *one* part of his Word againſt *another*, by making his *Promiſes* to undermine his *Precepts*, and the *Truth* of his *Doctrines* to render all his *threatnings falſe* and uſeleſs: I ſay, ſince ſuch an untowardly *partial*, and *gainſaying knowledge* and *belief* as *this*, is in very deed ſo plain a *Libel* to his *Perſon*, ſo *hateful* a *violence* to his *Truth*, and ſuch a *contradicting* piece of *Infidelity* to his *Goſpel*, it can never be thought to be *that Obedience* which he *commands* and *encourages*, but ſuch a piece of *contumelious flattery*, and *fawning diſobedience*,

ente, as he will moſt *ſeverely puniſh* and *condemn*.

But if we believe his *whole* Goſpel, and beſides the faith of his *Doctrines* and *Promiſes*, take moreover all his *Precepts* to be ſuch as he *injoins*, and all his *threatnings*, in their *true* meaning, to be ſuch as he will *execute*; and yet, for all that, in our *works* and *practice deſpiſe*, and *ſin* againſt them; then is *ſuch* our faith and knowledge ſo far from rendring our condition *ſafe* and *comfortable*, that in very deed it makes it quite *deſperate*, and utterly bereft of all *colour* and *excuſe*. For it takes from us all *plea* for diſobedience, and leaves us not *ſo* much as the *common* refuge of all miſdoing, the pretence that *we did offend but did not know it*. It makes every ſin which we commit to be acted with a *high hand*, and all our *offences*, to become *contempt*, our *diſobedience*, *rebellion*; and our *tranſgreſſions*, *preſumptuous*. For we ſin then with *open* eyes, we know Gods Commands, but refuſe to practiſe them; we diſcern our duty, but deſpiſe it. It makes us not only to *renounce* his *Authority*, but alſo to *defie* his *Power*. For we know his Almighty Strength, but we will not fear it; we ſee his dreadful threatnings, but yet *dare* to commit the things which he has threatned in deſpite of them. We ſee and believe that our Death is entailed upon our diſobedience, but for all that we chooſe and run upon it. We *contemn* all his *Commands*, and ſet *light* by all his *Promiſes*, and *deſpiſe* all his *Threatnings*: We ſee and believe them all, but *prefer* the pleaſure of our ſins before them, and tranſgreſs in open affront to them. And ſuch a ſtate as *this*, every man muſt needs ſee is ſo far from gaining his *favour*, and aſcertaining his *acceptance*; that in reality it is a *continued heightning* of every *provocation*, an *habitual hoſtility*, and ſtate of *crying ſin*.

But

But if ever our *Orthodox Faith* and *Professions* avail us unto *Life* and *Pardon*, they must end in our *Obedient Works* and *Actions*. We must do that which we know God requires, and practise that Pure Religion which we profess; *If ye know these things*, says our Saviour, *happy are ye if ye do them*, Joh. 13. 17. *It is not every* verbal Professor, every *one that saith unto me*, or calls me *Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he* only *that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 7. 21. We are condemn'd out of our own mouths if we commend Christs Religion, whilst we contemn and disobey it: Every word which we speak in its behalf, is a charge against our own selves, and every Plea which we make for *it*, is to *us* an accusation. For if it be a Religion so *pure*, so *good*, so *worthy of God*, and so *beneficial to men* as we profess it is, the more *unpardonable* wretches *we* that *transgress* and act against it. All the praises which we heap upon our Duty, are a most bitter invective upon our own practice; and the more we commend Christs Religion and Laws, the more we condemn our own transgressions; so that now God in exacting the punishment, be it as severe as it well can, only executes our own sentence. We are made the *worse* for our *knowledge*, if our *Actions* are not *ruled* by it; for it shews plainly, that our *Lusts* are most *obstinate*, and our *wills* most *wicked*; when for all we are clearly shewed the *Laws*, the *Promises*, and the *threats of God*, we can yet *despise* them all, and for the *short* pleasure of a silly sin *transgress*, and act against them. And since it doth thus enhanse our *Sin*, we may be sure that it will proportionably encrease our *punishment*. For *he that knows his masters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*, Luk. 12. 47.

And thus we ſee, that this thinking to be ſaved by the *labour* of our *minds*, without any *works* of our *lives* and *practice*; and coming to Heaven barely by a *True Belief*, and *Orthodox Opinions*, and *Right Profeſſions*, without ever *obeying* in our *works* and *actions*; is *one* of thoſe *falſe* and *deluſive* grounds, whereupon men ſhift off the neceſſity of this ſervice *with all their ſtrength*, the ſervice of their *Actions*.

And another falſe ground of ſhifting off the ſame ſervice is,

2. The deluſive confidence which wicked men have of being ſaved at the laſt Day for an *obedience of idle deſires*, and *ineffective wiſhes*.

It is a *ſtrange* conceit which ſome people have been taught, *viz.* that *the deſire of Grace is Grace*, and that *God will* at the laſt Day *judge men to have obeyed*, although they have not *wrought*, but only *deſired* it. There is a *complaiſant* ſort of *Caſuiſtry*, and a much eaſier than ever God made, that has been brought into the World, which bids men to *hope well*, though they *do nothing*, ſo long as they find in themſelves a *deſire* that they could do it. They wiſh they were what God expects, and that they performed what he commands; but they do no more but wiſh it. They ſit ſtill, and work no more now they have wiſhed it, than they did before. Theirs is a *weakly infant-deſire*, it *juſt lives*, but that is all, it can *effect nothing*. For the *ſmalleſt luſt* is too *ſtrong* for it, and the *leaſt temptation overbears* it; the deſire of the Vertue is huſh'd when the opportunity of the Sin returns, for notwithſtanding all the contrary deſire, this is acted at the next offer. Obedience is not deſired ſo much as their eaſe; for they love it not ſo well, as to be at the neceſſary pains for it. It is a ſqueamiſh delicate deſire; it would obey if that could be without trouble, but it will undergo nothing for obedience.

But

But this is a conceit as *ſtrange*, as it is *deſtructive*; and ſuch, wherewith the *ſimpleſt* of men ſuffer themſelves to be impoſed upon in no *other* matters, but only *this*, which moſt of all requires their care and caution, *viz.* the *eternal welfare of their ſouls*, and *the truth of their obedience*. For who ever took his *deſire of gain* to be *gain*, his *deſire of eaſe* to be *eaſe*, his *deſire of meat* to be *food*, his *deſire of cloaths* to be *rayment*, or his *deſire of knowledge* to be *knowledge?* And why then muſt that be *true* in *Religion*, which is always *falſe* in *common life?* and the *deſire of Grace* be ſaid to be *Grace*, and the *deſire of obedience*, *obedience?* Our *deſires* are *one* thing, but the *thing deſired* is *another*. Our deſires are *within*, but the object deſired is *without* us. Our deſires are *our own*, but the thing deſired is *wanting*. For ſo far is our *deſire* of any thing from being the *very thing* it ſelf which is *deſired*, that it is not always joined with it, but we poſſeſs *one*, whilſt we are without the *other*. For alas! we find that thoſe things which we *need*, and have a *mind* to, do not come at the *beck* of a *deſire*, nor are procured by a *wiſh*; but we muſt do more than deſire them, *endeavour* after them, and *work* or *act* for them, or elſe we ſhall ſit *without* them. A man doth not preſently *poſſeſs meat* becauſe he is *hungry*, or is *Owner* of a *great Eſtate* becauſe he is *covetous*; no, he muſt *labour* and *ſeek*, as well as *deſire*, both for the *one* and the *other*, or elſe let him deſire what he will, he ſhall *get* neither.

'Tis true a *deſire of money* is a great *preparative* to *get mony*, and a *deſire of knowledge* a good *diſpoſition* to *attain knowledge*; becauſe our *appetites* and *deſires* are, of all the *paſſions*, the *great* and moſt *immediate Spring* of our *outward works* and *operations*. For *delight* begets *love*, and *love* ends in *deſire*, and *deſire* carries us on to *work* and *labour* for the thing deſired. We ſeek after

ter a thing, becauſe we long for it; and take pains about it, becauſe we deſire it. And thus our *deſires of Grace* and *Obedience* are *Grace* and *Obedience*. That is, Our *deſire of Grace*, is not *Grace* it ſelf; nor our *deſire of Obedience*, *Obedience*; but a *good ſtep* and *degree* towards them. It is ſo *metonymically*, it is the *Principle* and the *Cauſe* of it. For therefore we acquire Grace, and perform Obedience; becauſe we deſire them. We ſhould take no pains about them, were it not for our deſires of them; but becauſe we have a mind to them, therefore we labour after them.

But till our deſires come on to *this effect*, they have no title to the rewards of *it*. Becauſe although *they* are a *gift* of Gods Grace, 'tis true, as well as *Obedience* it ſelf is; yet are they not *that* Grace which in the Judgment ſhall *entitle* us to pardon and happineſs. For the *promiſe* to the *Deſire of Obedience*, is *one*; but the *promiſe* to *Obedience* it ſelf, is *another*. If we *ſincerely deſire* to *do Gods will*, *i.e.* if we deſire it ſo, as according to the beſt of our power to endeavour after it; the *promiſe* to that is, That *we ſhall be enabled to do it*. For one promiſe of the *New Covenant* is, That *God will grant unto us to ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs*, Luke 1. 74, 75; which he will *then* do, *when* we *deſire* it of him, by *giving his holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. But if we do *indeed* obey it, the promiſe to that is, That we ſhall be ſaved by it. For *Chriſt is become the Authour of eternal ſalvation to them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. And it is ſaid expreſly of *them* that *obey*, That *they ſhall have right to the tree of life*, Rev. 22. 14. So that to the *honeſt deſire* of obedience, all that God *promiſes* is the *power to perform* and *work obedience*; but *that* whereunto *mercy* and *life* is promiſed, is nothing leſs than *obedience* it ſelf. For to *the working out our ſalvation* it is required, as Saint *Paul* ſays, that we be wrought

wrought upon, not only to *will* what God commands, but alſo to *do* it, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13.

The great pretence whereby men of idle, unworking deſires, would plead for their unfruitfulneſs, and ſupport their hopes of a happy Sentence under a life of diſobedience; is a miſtaken ſence of theſe words of Saint *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Galatians*: *The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would*, Gal. 5. 17. Which words they interpret thus: The *Spirit* in all good men *luſteth* againſt the *Fleſh*, but not ſo *far* as to *prevail over* it: for although they may *will* and *deſire* with the *Spirit*, yet they cannot *do* thoſe things which they would. And if this be ſo, 'tis plain that we have warrant enough to hope for mercy notwithſtanding we only *deſire*, but are not able to *perform*.

But this is a plain perverting of the Apoſtles words from the Apoſtles own meaning. For although he ſays that the *luſting* is on *both* ſides, both of the *Fleſh* againſt the *Spirit*, and of the *Spirit* againſt the *Fleſh*; yet as for the *ineffectiveneſs*, or *not doing what is willed and deſired*, that he charges only upon *one*. He leaves *it* purely and ſolely to the *Fleſhes* ſhare, which can indeed *luſt* and *deſire* evil things even in *regenerate* men, but is not able to prevail ſo far as to *work* and *effect* them, becauſe the *over-ruling* will of the *Spirit* checks and reſtrains it. Through the victorious *luſting of the Spirit againſt the Fleſh*, ſaith he, it comes to paſs that *you cannot do* or * do not *thoſe things which* from the inſtigation of your Fleſh *you deſire* and *would* do. And to ſhew this to be his ſenſe, I need do no more than ſet down his words in that order wherein they ſtand; which is as follows: *This I ſay then, Walk in the Spirit, and you ſhall not* work and *fulfil the luſts of the Fleſh*. Not work and fulfil them, I ſay, notwithſtanding you will

* μὴ ποιῆτε.

will ſtill feel an ineffective and unconquering ſtirring of them. *For the Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh, and theſe two are contrary one to the other. So that* in walking or working, as I ſaid, after the luſtings and deſires of the Spirit, you fulfil not the luſts of the Fleſh which are contrary to it; *ye cannot do,* or you do not *the things* that your Fleſh luſts after, which *yet,* through its luſting, *ye would,* ver. 16, 17. Whereas if this *laſt* Clauſe were expounded thus, *Ye do not the things that your Spirit luſts after, which yet, through its luſting, ye would do*; it would deſtroy that which the Apoſtle brings it to *confirm, viz.* their not *willing* and *deſiring* only, but *doing* or *walking* alſo *after the Spirit,* ſo as *not to fulfil the works of the Fleſh,* v. 16. Which in plain Engliſh is to make the Apoſtle in the ſame breath to *ſay* and *unſay,* to tell them of *walking in the Spirit,* and *not fulfilling the luſts of the Fleſh*; becauſe they *do not after the Spirit,* but *do fulfil the luſts of the Fleſh.* Which is flatly to make the Apoſtles proof to contradict the Apoſtles affirmation.

If therefore we would approve our ſelves regenerate, and have a juſt hope of life and pardon at the laſt Day; we muſt not only *wiſh* and *deſire,* but *live* and *walk* after the *Spirit,* The ſervice of the *Fleſh* indeed muſt go no further than *deſire*; and although we ſhall all of us, more or leſs, have luſtings from it, yet muſt we not
*Rom. 13. 14. * fulfil them. But as for the ſervice of *God,* it muſt have our *hands* as well as our *hearts*; for it is not enough to *will* and *deſire* what he commands, but we muſt moreover *practiſe* and *perform* it.

As for the *affirmative* Commands of God, it is not required that we perform every one of them at *every time*; for ſo our whole life would be taken up in the keeping of one Command, and we could never obſerve *all,* ſince we cannot do any *two* things, and much leſs ſuch

ſuch a *multitude* at the ſame time. But all that obedience which God requires of us to *them*, is that we act them as his *Providence*, and ordering of *times* and *occaſions* gives us *opportunity*. Now although for the main Body and greateſt Number of them, *every man* has opportunities returning almoſt *every day*; yet for a *perfect* and compleat performance of ſome of them, *ſome men* have not opportunity at *ſome times*, nor *others* in *all their lives*. I inſtance in the affirmative Command of *Almsgiving*. A man that has but *little*, can give but little at any time; and a *rich* man, if he be in a ſtrange place, and have no great ſtock about him, although he have a great Object of Charity, can yet make but ſmall relief. So that in *both* theſe the *work* of Alms and *outward performance*, muſt needs be very *ſtrait*; although *both* of them in their *hearts* and deſires are never ſo *liberal*. They have not power, and opportunity, to *act* as they *would*; they would perform more if their circumſtances would allow it. And now in this Caſe, God doth not *meaſure* their *obedience* by the *ſize* of their *outward performance*; he looks not ſo much at what *was done*, as at what *would have been done* had they had ability. So that they ſhall be accepted according to the *greatneſs* of their *will*, and not according to the *narrowneſs* of their *deed*; and their reward ſhall be fitted to what was in their heart, and not that which appeared in their action.

And *this* very Caſe is expreſly determined by S. *Paul* in his *ſecond* Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. For exhorting *them* to contribute to the relief of the Saints in *Judea*, as the *poor* Chriſtians in *Macedonia* had already done moſt *liberally*, he encourages them to give what they could out of their preſent livelihood, by telling them, that albeit it were not ſo much as they could wiſh, and were forward in their own hearts to give if they were

able; yet in Gods acceptance it ſhould be eſtimated as if it were. For *if there be firſt a willing mind*, ſaith he, *it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*, chap. 8. v. 11, 12.

This is the very caſe for which the Apoſtle lays down this rule, as any man may ſee who will be at the pains to peruſe that Chapter. He ſpeaks it upon no other occaſion, but where our *wills* are really ready to perform farther than our *outward fortune* enables us. He gives it as an *Axiome* only where our inward reſolutions are larger than our poſſeſſions. For where our heart is indeed ready to do *more*, than in our neceſſitous circumſtances we *can* do; there God looks upon the *will*, and not upon the *work*; and rewards us according to the *compaſs* of our *deſires*, but not according to the *ſcantineſs* of our *performance*.

But if any man ſhall conclude from hence, that when it is *in his Power* to do what is commanded, God will ſtill accept of an *idle deſire* without an *active performance*; he may uſe S. *Paul*'s *words* indeed, but he perverts them wholly to his *own meaning*. For the Apoſtle ſpake them in *one* caſe, and there they are *true*; but he applies them to *another*, and there they will *deceive* him. Becauſe the *will* is never accepted for the *deed*, when it is in our power to *do* as well as to *will*; and whereſoever we have opportunity to *do* what we *deſire*, it is not the *willing*, but the *doing* that muſt *ſave* us; as the Apoſtle himſelf intimates in this very place, when he preſſes them to compleat their *readineſs to will*, by *performing* according as they were able, verſ. 11.

So that this thinking to be ſaved by an *idle deſire*, and an *ineffective wiſh* of obedience, without ever obeying in our *works* and *actions*, is every whit as falſe and deluſive as the *former* deceitful ground was, of being ſaved

ſaved at the laſt day barely upon the account of an *Orthodox Faith* and *Opinions*.

Thirdly, Another falſe ground whereupon men hope to be ſaved, though they *work* diſobedience, is becauſe when they do ſo, it is through the *violence* of a *great* and *overpowering temptation*, which they *ſee* and *reſiſt*, but cannot *prevail over*. They are drawn in by a *great gain*, or a *great pleaſure*, the *bait* laid for them is *very enticing*, and there is *no withſtanding* it.

This indeed is a *great* and an *uſual* pretence. For men would gladly ſhift off their ſin, and charge it upon any thing but their own ſelves. They would have the *pleaſures of their fleſh*, and the *pride of their hearts* both ſerved at once, enjoy all the *pleaſures of ſin*, and yet have the *praiſes of virtue*. * *Whenſoever they do well*, as a great Philoſopher has obſerved, *they would arrogate that to themſelves; but when they do amiſs, they would impute that to the pleaſure that miſlead them, and to the ſtrength of temptation.*

* Ἀεὶ μὲ καλῶν πραξέων πολλὰ τὶς ἑαυτὸν αἰτιᾶται, ἢ ἐξ αἰσχρῶν, οὐχ ἑαυτὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἡδονήν. Andron. Rhod. Paraph. in Eth. Ariſt. l. 3. c. 2.

But this is a very vain ſhift, and a thin pretence. For what is it that makes any *temptation ſtrong*, but the *wickedneſs of mens own hearts*? They are ſlaviſhly in love with it, and therefore they cannot reſiſt it, but are overcome by it. † *It is ridiculous to think*, ſays the ſame excellent Philoſopher, *that the pleaſure of the ſin which is without us, is the cauſe of our ſinful action; and not rather that we our ſelves are, who are ſo wickedly inclined, as to be ſo eaſily taken by it.* It is only the ſtrength of our *own ſinful luſts*, that gives ſuch an irreſiſtible ſtrength to the *outward temptation*. A *great offer of gain* indeed, cannot be withſtood by a *covetous heart*; and an *inviting beauty*, and a *fair opportunity*, are irreſiſtable to a *ſlave of luſt*, and a laſcivious reigning inclination. But if the man is *above the world*, and his *heart is chaſte*, they are of no *force*, nor can they offer *any violence* at all.

† γελοῖόν ἐστιν αἰτίαν νομίζειν τὴν τῶν πραξέων τὰ ἔξωθεν καλὰ καὶ ἡδέα, καὶ μὴ ἑαυτὸν ὧν τοιοῦτον ἁπαδίως ἁλισκόμενον. Ibid. & Ariſt. Eth. ad Nicom. l. 3. c. 1.

It is the *wickedneſs of our own hearts luſts* therefore, which are ſo deeply in love with them, and ſo unbridledly bend after them, that gives all the *prevailing force*, and *overpowering ſtrength* to *outward temptations*. But now this is our *Sin*, and ſo can by no means plead our *excuſe*; it is our *damnable diſeaſe*, and therefore it can never prove our *ſaving remedy*. For this is that *reigning power* of *Sin*, which the *Goſpel* has indiſpenſably required us to *mortifie*, but not to *ſubmit* to. It is only *if you through the ſpirit do mortifie the deeds of the body*, ſays S. *Paul*, *that you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13. Col. 3. 5.

But if we are not under this *damnable ſervitude* to *Sin*, there are no *temptations* ſo *ſtrong*, but that *God* has given us *ſufficient defenſatives* againſt them. For the preſent offer of a *Gibbet*, would fright away the moſt *endearing temptation*; the near expectation of a *great Eſtate*, or of a *Crown*, would make us prevail over it. And what are *theſe* to *Hell fire*, and an *eternal* Crown of Glory? *Heaven* therefore and *Hell*, when they can be conſidered of, are an anſwer to all temptations in the world; they will engage our hearts *more* than all the *endearments* of a luſt, and infinitely *out-do* all the *baits* and *allurements* of ſin.

If we commit ſin then, it is no *ſufficient* excuſe to us that the *temptation* was *ſtrong*, becauſe it was only the *ſtrength* of our own *unmortified luſts* that made it ſo. For we *loved* the *ſinful pleaſure* too well, and that was the reaſon why it *overpower'd* us. And ſince the ſtrength of temptation is owing only to the ſtrength of ſin, it can never excuſe us from undergoing puniſhment. So that *this* muſt needs be a falſe hope, to think of being excuſed for our ſin, becauſe we acted it through the *violence of a great temptation*.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Another ground of falſe confidence, whereupon men hope to be ſaved, although they do not *obey* in their *works* and *actions*, but are workers of ſin and diſobedience; is, becauſe when they do *tranſgreſs*, it is with *reluctance* and *unwillingneſs*. Albeit in their *actions* they do *ſerve ſin*, yet in their *minds* they do not *approve* of it, their ſervice of it is an *unwilling* and a *ſlaviſh ſervice*. They cannot ſin freely, and at their own eaſe, but with fearfulneſs and regret. For the *Conviction of their* duty abides in their *Conſciences*, the *fear of hell torments* ſticks faſt in their *ſouls*; they cannot ſhake off, either their *ſenſe of duty*, or their *fears of puniſhment*. So that even when they do ſin againſt God, it is with *remorſe* of mind, and *fearfulneſs* of apprehenſion. They cannot embrace their ſin with a *full choice*, becauſe they know it is not an *unmixed* pleaſure. They believe and know it to be of a *compound*, and *mixt nature*; to have ſome *preſent pleaſure* which will delight, but withal much *future puniſhment* which will torment them. And ſince they know it to be a *compoſition* of *good* and *ill*, they do not *perfectly* either *love* or *hate*, *chooſe* or *refuſe* it. Their will is *diſtracted* by different motives in the ſame choice; for the *future pains* would draw them to *reject*, but the preſent *joyes* invite them to *embrace* it. So that in a different *degree* they both *will*, and *nill* the ſame thing; they would *have* it, and yet they would *avoid* it. For they would enjoy what they deſire, but withal they would keep off from what they fear: they have a mind to commit the ſin, becauſe it will pleaſe them for the *preſent*; and yet they are afraid of it, becauſe of that wrath which it treaſures up for them againſt the time to come.

But notwithſtanding all this *conflict* in their own *choice*, yet at laſt their *ſin prevails*, and they obey it. For they had *rather* hazard all its torments, than miſs

of

of its delights; they are unwilling to venture upon thoſe dangers which it brings, but yet they had rather venture on *them* than go without it. They ſin *unwillingly*, juſt as a *labourer works*, or as a *Soldier fights unwillingly*; that is, they do not *will* it for *it ſelf*, they would *not do* it unleſs they were *hired* to it. For conſidering *all* things, they will to act, and not to omit it; their will is againſt it indeed at the *firſt* ſight, but upon *better* conſideration it reſolves upon it, and all things laid together they chooſe to commit the ſin, rather than to forbear it.

But now this is ſuch a *State*, as will never bring any man to *Heaven*: For whether he tranſgreſs *willingly* or with *reluctancy*, is not the queſtion; but if he *chooſe* at laſt to *diſobey*, when God comes to judgment he ſhall be ſure to pronounce upon him that *death* which he has eſtabliſhed for the puniſhment of diſobedience. Becauſe for all he *fears* and *miſtruſts*, *grumbles* and *repines*; yet he *ſerves* and *obeys* his *luſts* all the while notwithſtanding. He works at their will, and doth what they command him. He ſerves not with a full heart, or a fearleſs mind; but yet he is their ſervant ſtill.

'Tis true indeed, it is ſome *mitigation* of his ſin that he doth it with *regret*, and the tranſgreſſion is ſomething the leſs for being acted not without reluctance and averſion. It ſhews that his *ſenſe of duty* is not *quite loſt*; his *Conſcience*, *wholly ſear'd*; or his *fear* of God *utterly extinguiſhed*. It is ſome extenuation that he *ſtartles* at the offence; for it argues that his ſoul is not *wholly depraved*, or his heart *harden'd* in diſobedience. But although his ſins be not of the *higheſt* rate, yet he is a *loſt* ſinner ſtill. For ſo long as his *luſts* prevail, and he chooſes at laſt to *act* and *commit* them, he *ſerves* and *obeys* them. It is his *works* and *actions* that muſt determine his *ſervice* and *obedience*; ſo that if he *commit* ſin, he

he is the *ſervant* of ſin. *Willing* or *unwilling* may *extenuate* or *heighten* his diſobedience, but not utterly *deſtroy*, or *alter* the *nature* of it.

For indeed ſomething of *ſtruggling* and *regret* is to be found in the *obedience* and *diſobedience* of the greateſt part of the world. There being *few* ſo good, as to obey without all *reluctance*; and *few* ſo wicked, as to ſin without all *remorſe*. For as long as we are in *this* life, we are a *mixt* and *compound* ſubſtance of *Soul* and *Body*, *Fleſh* and *Spirit*. Our *carnal appetite* draws us on to *forbidden* things, to tranſgreſs thoſe reſtraints which Gods Law has ſet to it, and to *ſin*. And our *Conſcience* being enlightned with the *knowledge* of Gods Laws, and allured by his *Promiſes*, and affrighted with his *threatnings*; would perſwade us to keep within *his bounds*, and to *act obedience*. Now theſe *two contrary* and *gainſaying* Principles, *diſtract* our *choice*, and *divide* our wills; ſo that when we cloſe with *one* of them, it is not without the grudging and reluctance of the *other*. We would, and we would not; one inclines us for a thing, and the other againſt it. *The fleſh*, ſays S. *Paul*, *luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe are contrary one to the other, ſo that you cannot* fulfil both their deſires, and *do* each of *the things that you would*, Gal. 5. 17. If we *obey*, it is through the *repining* of our *appetites*; and if we *tranſgreſs*, it is with the *remorſe* and *laſhings* of our *Conſciences*: On *both* ſides there is ſomething that is evil, whereof we are *afraid*, and which we *would not*; our will is *imperfect*, and with *reluctance*; and we *will* and *chooſe* in ſome meaſure *unwillingly*, whether it be to *work obedience* or *ſin*.

As for the *Saints* in *Heaven* after the *Reſurrection*; 'tis true that they ſhall have no *gainſaying appetites*. For their *fleſh* will be in *perfect* ſubjection to the

the *ſpirit*; their *will* ſhall have nothing to *ſeduce* it, but ſhall ſtand always *firm* and *entire* for *God*; ſo that they ſhall obey without *any thing* of *reluctance* or *regret*.

And as for *ſome* of the *profligate*, and *prophane ſinners* here on *earth*; they have *now* already ſo quite benum'd their *Conſciences*, that they neither *allure* nor *threaten*, *admoniſh* nor *accuſe* them. And they ſin without all contention; they tranſgreſs, and do not diſpute; their luſts hurry them without any oppoſition; ſo that they diſobey moſt *willingly*, and free from all *remorſe*.

But as for *all* the *good*, and the *generality* of the *wicked* here on *earth*, they are of a *middle* rate. They both of them act through ſtrife, and conqueſt; their conſent is courted on *both* ſides, and when they comply with *one*, they muſt refuſe the *other*. Both *Fleſh* and *Spirit* ſtruggle in them, although at laſt but *one* prevails. For in the *Regenerate* good man, the fleſh ſtirs, but it cannot conquer; they have bodies, and bodily appetites, but they ſubdue them, and, as S. *Paul* ſays, *keep them under*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. So that all the while the Spirit *rules* in them, when the fleſh doth but in *vain ſolicite*; this may *tempt*, but it cannot *govern*; for the Spirit gives them Laws, its pleaſure they perform, and what it commands, that in their actions they obey. But in the *wicked* and *diſobedient*, the caſe is quite oppoſite. For in *them*, although their *Conſcience ſmite* them, yet can it not *prevail* with them; it ſuggeſts, but they will not hearken; it ſhews the way, but they will not follow it; in all things their Luſts are the governours of their lives and actions; ſo that although the laſhes of their conſciences may ſharpen and embitter, yet are they not able to diſappoint the ſervice of their ſin.

In *all* the obedience therefore, and in the *greateſt* *part*

part of the tranſgreſſions here on *Earth*; there is ſtill ſomething of *ſtrugling* and *reluctance*. Men act not by a *will* that is void of all *reſtraint*, or by a *deſire* and *choice* that is *free* from all *unwillingneſs*; but there is a *mixture* of *love* and *hatred*, an *unwilling will* that carries them on, either to act obedience, or to diſobey.

But notwithſtanding their *ineffective wiſhes*, and *imperfect wouldings* to the contrary; it is their *peremptory will* and *laſt choice* which ſhall determine their *condition*. For if they will and chuſe to do what God commands, in ſpite of all the gainſaying wiſhes raiſed by their fleſhly Appetites; they ſhall be pardoned and acquitted. When the good man overcomes the temptation, and prevails over his unwillingneſs, and triumphing over it goes on to practiſe and obey; he ſhall receive the reward of his obedience. But if they will and chuſe to do what God forbids, in ſpite of all the contrary Admonitions and Threatnings of their Conſciences; they ſhall dye in their diſobedience. The Sinner who is carried on to do what he diſallows, to work what he fears, and to commit what, at firſt ſight, his will is averſe to; he ſhall undergo the ſmart and puniſhment of his tranſgreſſion.

And the reaſon is plain; for he *ſerves* his *ſin*, and *fulfils* his *luſt*, and his *thraldome* to it is ſo *abſolute* that no *aids* of the *Spirit*, nor any *ſuggeſtions* of his *Conſcience* can *deliver* him from it. *He that committeth ſin*, ſaith our Saviour, *is the ſervant of ſin*, John 8. 34. So long as it *conquers*, it doth indeed *inſlave* him; *For of whom a man is overcome, of the ſame*, ſays S. *Peter*, *he is brought in bondage*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. If we yield our ſelves up to *ſerve* it, we do indeed *obey* it; and muſt expect that *death*, which is denounced upon ſuch obedience. *Know you not*, ſaith another Apoſtle, *that to whom you yield your ſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants*

you are to whom you obey; whether of ſin unto death, or of obedience unto righteouſneſs, Rom. 6. 16. If we are at the beck of our Luſts, and go where they ſend, and do what they command us, and acknowledge their pleaſure in all things to be a Law to us; we are perfect Slaves to them, and liable to all that miſery which is denounced upon them. We ſerve and obey them; and that ſhall ſurely bring us to ſuffer for them. For it is the *fulfilling* of our luſts, the *doing* or *walking* after them, and the *obeying* of our ſin, which Chriſts Goſpel *threatens* ſo ſeverely, whatever *mind* we do it with. *If you live after the fleſh*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *you ſhall dye*; and it is only *if you through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body* that *you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13. When Chriſt comes to Judgment, the enquiry will not be, Whether we ſinned with a *full delight*, or with *fear* and *reluctance*; but whether in very deed, without repenting of it afterwards, we ſinned *wilfully*, or tranſgreſſed at all. For we have what ſhall be his Sentence at that Day, from his own mouth already, *Depart from me ye that work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23.

So that it will be no ſufficient Plea for any man at the laſt Day, who has diſobeyed in *deed* and *wrought* wickedneſs, to ſay, That he did it with *backwardneſs* and *remorſe*. For that which God indiſpenſably requires, is, that he ſhould not do it at all; and he will only deceive himſelf if he ever expect to be accepted otherwiſe. For as the *hopes of ſalvation* upon mere *orthodox opinions*, or *ineffective deſire* of obedience, or *ſinning* through a *ſtrong temptation* are utterly *deluſive*, and ſure to fail them that truſt to them: ſo is the *fourth* ground likewiſe, *viz. our hopes of being accepted notwithſtanding our ſins, becauſe we tranſgreſſed with reluctance and unwillingneſs.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

A further purſuit of this laſt ground of ſhifting off the Obedience of our actions, in an Expoſition of the ſeventh Chapter to the Romans.

The CONTENTS.

A further purſuit of this laſt ground of falſe confidence. The Plea for it from Rom. 7. *repreſented. This refuted. A Metaſchematiſm uſual with S.* Paul *in an odious Topick. The Apoſtle ſhown not to ſpeak of himſelf in that Chapter, becauſe of ſeveral things there ſpoken which are not truly applicable to him. This evidenced in ſundry inſtances. Nor to have ſpoken in the perſon of any regenerate man, which is proved by the ſame reaſon, and manifeſted in ſundry Particulars. But to have perſonated a ſtruggling, but as yet unregenerated Jew, who had no further aſſiſtance againſt his luſts, but the weak and ineffective Law of* Moſes. *This ſhown from the order and deſign of that Chapter. This whole matter repreſented in a Paraphraſe upon the ſeventh Chapter, with part of the ſixth, and the eighth. Two Reaſons of the inability of* Moſes's *Law to make men wholly obedient; and the perfection, as to them of the Law of Chriſt,* viz. Firſt, *The promiſe of eternal life.* Secondly, *The promiſe of the Spirit. Both theſe were wanting in the Law; and are moſt clearly ſupplied in the Goſpel. The Jews had the aſſiſtance of the Spirit, not by virtue of any Article in their Law; but by the gracious Covenant of the Goſpel, which has been confirmed with the world ever ſince* Adam. *The*

Law mentioned in Scripture as a weak, and mean inſtrument upon the account of theſe defects. This weakneſs of the Law ſet off particularly in this ſeventh to the Romans. *No hopes to any man who acts ſin from this Chapter; but plain declarations of the neceſſity of a working obedience ſhown in ſeveral expreſſions of it to that purpoſe. A proof of the neceſſity of this fourth part of integrity, the obedience of our executive powers in our works and actions; and the inſignificancy of all the reſt when it is wanting.*

THAT which has been the great occaſion of this *laſt* pretence, whereby men juſtifie themſelves in the *practice* of diſobedience, *viz.* becauſe *when they do tranſgreſs, it is with reluctancy and an unwilling mind*; is a wrong underſtanding of the words of Saint *Paul* in the ſeventh Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*. For
Verſe 15. thus ſays he, *That which I do, I,* being ſufficiently inſtructed in the Law which forbids it, in my mind and conſcience *allow not. For what,* through the Laws commanding, *I would* do, *that do I not: but what,* from the Laws prohibiting, *I hate,* and would not do, *that*
18. *do I. The good that I would do, I do not. For although*
19. *to will* it *is preſent with me, yet* through the prevailing power of my Fleſh *how to perform* and practiſe *that which is good I find not. But the evil which I would not* do, *that do I.* And all this happens to me by reaſon
23. that *the Law of my* luſts or *members wars againſt the Law of* God in *my mind* or Conſcience, and that with ſo much ſucceſs, as to make me act againſt my Conſcience, *and bring me into* a ſlaviſh obſervance or *captivity to the Law of ſin, which is in my members. So that I*
* αὐτὸς ἐγὼ, *my ſelf,* or the * ſame I who, *with the mind* and Con-
Verſe 25. ſcience, in approving and willing *ſerve the Law of God,* do yet, *with the Fleſh,* in my bodily and outward works and

and operations, ſerve the Law of ſin.

Now ſince no leſs a man than S. *Paul* himſelf ſpeaks thus of *ſinning againſt his will*, of doing what he diſallows, and tranſgreſſing through the power of a ruling luſt againſt his Conſcience: it may well be thought reaſonable for any *other* man to conclude himſelf in a ſafe condition, although he do ſo likewiſe. For who would deſire to be more perfect than S. *Paul?* Who would ever ſcruple to have the ſame Lot in the next World with an Apoſtle? If an unwillingneſs in ſin, and tranſgreſſing with reluctance, could bear him out notwithſtanding he did againſt his Duty, and in works and actions diſobeyed his Lord; who can ever queſtion but that it will be a ſufficient Plea for us alſo?

And indeed if S. *Paul* had ſpoken all that of *himſelf*, and meant it of his own Perſon; the Inference is undeniable, and it is not to be doubted but it would. But for a full Anſwer to this Allegation, it is plain that Saint *Paul*, when he expreſſes all thoſe things in the *firſt perſon*; uſes that merely out of *modeſty*, but not out of *truth*. For he was upon an *odious* Topick, repreſenting the *unmortified* ſtate and *ſinful* condition of *thoſe perſons*, who had no other help againſt their *Luſts*, but the *Religion* and *Law of Moſes*. And becauſe this was a *Charge*, which they who were moſt guilty would not *love* to *hear* of, that he may *ſoften* the matter as much as may be, and diſcover things of ſo much reproach with the leaſt offence; he wiſely takes all the buſineſs, and fathers all the *ſhameful Narrative* upon *himſelf*; and expreſſes it, not in *theirs*, to whom it *really* did belong, but in his *own perſon*.

And as for this *Metaſchematiſm*, or ſpeaking things that are *odious* in his *own name*, when indeed they belong not to him, but to *other* men; it is very uſual with the Apoſtle. For in this Diſguiſe he recites a

moſt

moſt blaſphemous perverſion, which ſome men had made of his moſt pious Doctrine, *Rom.* 3. *If the truth of God*, or his faithfulneſs in performing his Covenant with us, *hath more abounded to his Glory through my lye*, or unfaithfulneſs in breaking my Covenant with him (which makes the moſt that can be for the honour of Gods faithfulneſs, ſince no perfidiouſneſs of ours can weary or provoke him out of it) *why yet am I*, not I *Paul*, who could never act thus falſly, or argue thus prophanely, but I blaſphemous Objector *judged as a Sinner?* v. 7. And the ſame way of ſpeech he obſerves again, when he charges the wicked lives of thoſe, who have given up their names to Chriſt, not upon his Religion, but upon their own ſelves. *If while we ſeek to be juſtified by Chriſt*, in the profeſſion of his Religion and not of *Moſes*'s Law, *we our ſelves are ſtill found Sinners*, and as flagitious in our lives as ever, *is therefore Chriſt the Miniſter of ſin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which* at my very Baptiſm into Chriſtianity *I deſtroyed*, as 'tis plain all Chriſtians do who after Baptiſm prove cuſtomary Sinners; it is no longer Chriſt who would reſcue and free me from ſin, but *I* my ſelf, not I *Paul*, but I flagitious Chriſtian that *make my ſelf a Tranſgreſſor*, Gal. 2. 17, 18, Thus alſo he ſpeaks in his own perſon, when he only perſonates the *ſtrong* but *uncomplying* Chriſtian, 1 *Cor.* 6. *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient*, ver. 12. And when he perſonates the *uncharitable* Chriſtian, 1 *Cor.* 13. *If I have all faith and have no Charity, what doth it profit* me? ver. 2. And the ſame inoffenſive way he uſes in noting faults in * other places.

1 Cor. 10. v. 22. 23, & 29, 30.

And ſuch an obliging diſguiſe in reprehending and expoſing the faults of others, is moſt uſual among our ſelves. Nothing being more common in our ordinary Diſcourſe, than when we would be ſharp in reproving, and

and inveighing againſt any thing, by a moſt courteous Fiction to put it in our *own* Caſe, and to ſuppoſe that *we our* ſelves ſhould do *this* or *that*. When as in the mean time we are no further concerned in it, than to be able under this diſguiſe with more ſucceſs, and leſs offence, to diſparage and chaſtiſe it.

And this way of *transferring odious things to our ſelves* when we would deſcribe and reprove them, which is ſo uſual with all the World, and with S. *Paul* in other Caſes, is particularly uſed by him in his Character of the ineffective Striver in this ſeventh Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*. He ſpeaks not thoſe things above recited, of *willing but not performing*, &c. in his own perſon, or in the perſon of any regenerated man; as will plainly appear from this reaſon.

Becauſe in that Chapter ſuch things are ſaid of the perſon there ſpoken of, as can by no means agree to S. *Paul*, or to any *regenerate* perſon; ſo that the Apoſtle muſt be made to falſifie, if he ſhould be underſtood to ſpeak ſo of them.

Such things, I ſay, are there ſpoken, as can by no means agree to S. *Paul* himſelf. For we read

Of the perſon ſpokn of there,	*Of Saint* Paul *himſelf elſewhere,*
That *he* lived and *was alive without the Law* of the ten Commandments, *once*, ver. 7. 9.	That he was both *born* and *bred* up *under the Law*, being *circumciſed the eighth Day, of the Stock of Iſrael, an Hebrew of the Hebrews*, or an Hebrew both by his Fathers and his Mothers ſide, *Phil.* 3. 5.

That

That the Law of his members wars againſt the Law of his mind, and brings him into captivity to the Law of ſin, which is ſeated and rules *in his members*, v. 23.

That *he keeps under his Body, and* is not led captive by it, but on the contrary *brings it into ſubjection* and captivity, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27.

That *how to* do or *perform what is good, he finds not*, v. 18.

That *he can do all things* which are good *through Chriſt that ſtrengthens him*, Phil. 4. 13.

That *ſin works in him all manner of luſt or concupiſcence*, v. 8.

That it works none, but that inſtead of *luſting* and *coveting worldly* things, *the world is crucified to him, and he unto the world*, Gal. 6. 14.

That *he is captivated* and conquered, and as a vanquiſhed Slave, *ſold under ſin*, v. 14. 23.

That *he has fought a good fight againſt it*, 2 Tim. 4. 7. And that *by the* †*Grace of God through Chriſt* he is delivered from it, *Rom.* 7. 25.

† χάρις τῦ θεῦ in exem. Claramont. & verſ. Lat. Not εὐχαριςῶ τῷ θεῷ.

That he ſinned againſt his Conſcience. For *what I do*, ſays he, in my practice, *that I allow not* in my mind or Conſcience: *but what I hate* and diſapprove, *that I do*, v. 15. 19.

That *he knew* or was * *conſcious* of *nothing by himſelf*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. but that *he truſted he had a good Conſcience*, and that *in all things*, being *willing to live honeſtly*, Heb. 13. 18. Acts 23. 1. For this had all along been his care, he having

* συνοίδα.

That he is in a ſtate of death: For *ſin revived, and he died*, verſ. 9. and by *deceiving him, it had ſlain him*, verſ. 11. The *good law he had found to be unto him the occaſion of death*, by his falling into that diſobedience whereto it had threatned it, *verſ.* 10 For *the motions of ſin, which were* not, and could not be reſtrained *by the law, wrought in his members to bring forth* damning ſins, or *fruit unto death*, v. 5.

having made it his buſineſs, and *exerciſed himſelf to have*, not now and then, but *always a conſcience void of offence*, or not wounded and ſmitten with the ſenſe of any offences, either *towards God or men*, Acts 24. 16.

That *the law of the ſpirit of life hath made him free from the law of ſin and death*, Rom. 8. 2. That *he has finiſhed his courſe* to his advantage; ſo as *there is laid up for him*, not a painful death, as the puniſhment of his diſobedience; but *a Crown* of Glory, as a reward *of* his *righteouſneſs*, *which the righteous judge will give him at the laſt day*, 2 Tim. 4. 8.

If therefore we will believe Saint *Paul*, and let thoſe accounts which he gives of himſelf explain his own meaning; he cannot be that very perſon who is there ſpoken of. For they are perſons altogether of a *different* ſtamp, and a *contrary* character: they are as oppoſite as one *under the Law*, and one *without it*; as a *ſervant of God*, and a *ſlave of ſin*; as a *ſpiritual*, and a *carnal man*; as *one whoſe conſcience approves*, and *another whoſe conſcience condemns him*; as *a child of God, and a*

child of darkneſs; as *an heir of Heaven*, and a *ſubject of Hell*. So that he cannot ſpeak of himſelf in that *ſeventh* Chapter, and in the *other* places too; becauſe then he would appear inconſiſtent with himſelf, and be found falſe in his own ſtory. And therefore as ſure as S. *Paul* is true, he ſays all that is ſpoken there in an inoffenſive diſguiſe, not intending to give a *character of* his *own perſon*, but to *perſonate another* man.

Nay, I add further, that the *perſon* whom he repreſents in that *Chapter*, is not only *another* from himſelf, but alſo one of a quite *oppoſite* and *contrary* character. He is not only *no Apoſtle*, but even *no good Chriſtian* or *regenerate* man. For ſuch things are there ſaid of him, as, if S. *Paul* and the other *Apoſtles* ſay true, are *inconſiſtent* with a *regenerate ſtate*, and deſtructive of ſalvation. As will plainly appear by conſidering thoſe things which are ſaid

Of *the perſon deſcribed there*,

That *with his fleſh* or fleſhly members, *he obeys the law of ſin*, ver. 25. And this he is forced to do, and cannot help it. For *the law of his members wars againſt the law of his mind, and brings him into captivity to the law of ſin and death*, v. 23. He is as abſolutely enſlaved to it, as ever any ſervant was to his maſter, who was ſold in the market. For, ſays he,

Of *the regenerate elſewhere*,

That as for *their members, they yield them not to be inſtruments unto ſin, but unto righteouſneſs*; becauſe now ſince their regeneration into true Chriſtians, *Sin is not to reign in their mortal bodies, that they ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof*, Rom. 6. 12, 13. In becoming Chriſtians *they are dead, and crucified with Chriſt, that the body of ſin might*, not *be* maintained

I am carnal, and *ſold under ſin*, v. 14.

That *ſin works* or accompliſhes, and brings on to * outward act and perfection *in him all manner of concupiſcence*, v. 8. For *taking occaſion by the* nakedneſs of the tenth *Commandment*, whereto no puniſhment was expreſly threatned, it *deceived him* into the *cuſtomary commiſſion* of it by that wile, *and thereby ſlew him*, verſ. 11.

* Katergázetai.

to live and rule in them, but *deſtroyed, that thenceforward they ſhould not ſerve ſin. For he that is dead is freed from ſin*, v. 6, 7. The Goſpel of Chriſt or *the law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, hath* not enſlaved, but *freed them from the law of ſin and death*, Rom. 8. 2. So that *ſin now ſhall not have dominion over them, becauſe they are not under the law*, through the weakneſs whereof it tyrannized, *but under* Grace, *Rom.* 6. 14.

That *their body is dead becauſe of ſin*, Rom. 8. 10. And that they *make no proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil* and accompliſh *the luſts* or concupiſcence *thereof*, *Rom.* 13. 14. Becauſe if they ſhould, they would ceaſe to be ſons of God, and heirs of happineſs, and be rendred obnoxious to miſery and death. For the plain declaration of Chriſts Goſpel concerning the heirs of life and death is this. *If you live after the fleſh* in accompliſhing its luſts, *you ſhall die*; and 'tis

That *the law he found to be unto death*, in diſcerning himſelf to be fallen under the curſe and condemnation of it, *verſ.* 10. For *the motions of ſin which were* incouraged and emboldened *by* means of the fancied impunity of *the law, wrought in his members*, which are the ſeat of their Empire, ſo far as to *to bring forth* damning ſins, or *fruit unto death*, v. 5.

That *in his fleſh dwells no good thing*, verſ. 18. For *ſin dwells* and inhabits *in him*, verſ. 17. and that ſo as to rule and govern, or have all the force of a *law in his members*, v. 23.

That he ſins againſt his own conſcience. For *what he doth, that he allows not; but what* in his own mind *he hates* and diſapproves, *that he doth*, v. 15, 19.

only, *if you through the ſpirit*, inſtead of acting and compleating, *do* kill and *mortifie the deeds of the body, that you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13.

That *againſt them there is no* condemning force of any *law*, Gal. 5. 23. For *the law of the ſpirit of life hath* not left them ſtill enſlaved, but *made them free from the law of ſin and death* too, *Rom.* 8. 2. And *being become the ſervants of God, they have their fruit*, not to ſin and death, but *to holineſs* at preſent, *and the end thereof* at length *everlaſting life*, Rom. 6. 22.

That *their bodies* or fleſhly members *are temples of the Holy Ghoſt*, and ſacred places wherein it inhabits; and that *they glorifie God in their bodies*, as well as in *their ſpirits*, ſeeing *both are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

That *they hold faith and a good conſcience, without which, of faith* in dangerous times *they would* ſoon *make ſhipwrack*, 1 Tim. 1. 19. And that *they are ſaved by the anſwer of a good conſci-*

ence,

That *to do good*, although he might wiſh, or approve it, *he found not*, v. 18.

ence, which comforts and applauds, but cannot accuſe them, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21.

That *he* only *who doth good is of God*, 3 John 11. and that *there is no condemnation to them who* do and *walk after the ſpirit*, Rom. 8. 1. And that without theſe *new fruits*, it is in vain to lay any claim to a *new nature*; becauſe, as our Saviour ſays, *if men were the children of Abraham, they would do the works of Abraham*, Joh. 8. 39.

That he ſtands in need to cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death*, being as yet not reſcued from it, but labouring under it, v. 25.

That *the body of ſin is* already *deſtroyed* in them, *that henceforth they ſhould not ſerve ſin*, which the other complains ſo much of, *Rom.* 6. 6. For *they are delivered from the law*, upon occaſion of the weakneſs whereof ſin brought forth in them fruits unto death, *to ſerve now in newneſs of Spirit*, Rom. 7. 5. So that what the weak, ineffective law could not do for them; that *the Grace of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord* hath done in an effectual deliverance of them, *v.* 25.

So

So that if we will take the word of St. *Paul*, and of the reſt of the *Apoſtles* in *this* matter; we muſt needs believe that *regenerate men*, and *heirs of heaven*, are not in any wiſe ſuch perſons as are deſcribed in that *ſeventh Chapter* to the *Romans*, there being no agreement or reſemblance at all between them. Their *tempers* and *behaviour* are utterly *inconſiſtent*, and as far diſtant as *Heaven* and *Hell*: For *one ſerves and fulfills the luſts of his fleſh*, the *other crucifies and ſubdues them*; one *yields his members ſervants unto ſin*, the other *unto righteouſneſs*; one *is made a perfect captive, and ſold under ſin*, the other *is made free from it*; one *is forced to act againſt his conſcience*, the other *always acts according to it*; one *complains of being oppreſſed by the body of death*, the other *rejoyceth in being deliver'd from it*; one *can perform and do no good*, the other *doth all good*; one *brings forth fruit unto death*, the other to *eternal life*.

Theſe, with *others* that might be mention'd, are the lines of difference, and the contrary characters of the *perſon* repreſented in the *ſeventh* Chapter to the *Romans*, and the *regenerate man* deſcribed by S. *Paul* himſelf in all his *other* Epiſtles, and in the *following* and *foregoing* Chapters of *this*. By all which it appears, that they are *Deſcriptions contradictory* and *incompatible*, which cannot at the ſame time be affirmed of the ſame man. And that to give ſuch an account of a *regenerate* man, as is there ſet down, would not in all appearance be the way to *deſcribe*, but rather *ſlanderouſly to libel* and *revile him*.

If any therefore enquire now how I know that Saint *Paul* doth not ſpeak of *himſelf* in that *Chapter*, nor of any other *regenerate* perſon; but of an *unregenerate* man, who is yet in the ſtate of *death* and *ſin*: he has his Anſwer *full* and *undeniable* already. I know he *doth* not

not mean ſo, becauſe he *cannot* mean ſo, the things which he ſays not *bearing* to be ſo underſtood. For *that meaning* would make his ſpeech to be no *Apoſtolical Truth*, but an *open falſehood*; it would make S. *Paul inconſiſtent* with himſelf, and to *unſay* at *one* time, what he had *ſaid* moſt *peremptorily* at *another*. It would make him flatly to gainſay all that he has taught elſewhere, yea, even what he had affirm'd almoſt in the ſame breath, in the *foregoing* and the *following Chapters*. So that he cannot be underſtood of himſelf, or of any other regenerate perſon, but muſt be allow'd, according to his uſual cuſtome in ſuch odious topicks as this was, to ſpeak all in a borrowed diſguiſe, and in *the perſon of a ſinful* and a *loſt man*.

For indeed, to be yet more particular, all that diſcourſe in that *ſeventh* Chapter is not meant either of S. *Paul*, or of any other *regenerate Chriſtian*; but of a *ſtruggling* and *contending*, although yet *unconquering* and *unregenerate* † *Jew*. For the Apoſtle is there deſcribing the ſtate, not of a *perfect debauch*, nor of a *perfect Saint*, but of a *middle* man. He is one whoſe *Conſcience* is awaken'd; for *he delights in the Law of God after the inner man* of his mind and reaſon, *verſ.* 22. and when he *doth evil*, *he doth not allow*, but diſapproves of it, *verſ.* 15. but yet his *practice* is enſlaved; for *to perform what is good he finds not*, verſ. 18. *what* in his mind *he hates*, *that he doth*, verſ. 15. *the law in his members bringing into captivity to the law of ſin*, ſo that *with his fleſh*, or in his bodily actions, *he obeys the law of ſin* ſtill, *verſ.* 23, 25. He ſtrives ſomething indeed, but not enough; he is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but as yet he is ſhort of it. He is a ſinner of the *middle* rate, ſuch as I have deſcribed in the laſt *Chapter*: For he is not as yet either quite hardned in ſin, or perfect in goodneſs; he is offering to go off from ſin, but ſtill it

† τὸν ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ νόμου πολιτευόμενον ἀνθρωπον ὑπογράφει. *Chryſoſtom upon the words, I am carnal*, v. 14.

it lays hold of him, and keeps him under; he is in the rank of unwilling ſinners, but he is a loſt ſinner ſtill. He is ſomething above the forlorn condition of mere *Nature*, and ſomething below the more perfect inſtitution of *Chriſt*; he is in a middle ſtate between both, under the diſcipline and aſſiſtance of the *Jewiſh Law*, or the *Religion of Moſes*.

And that this is the perſon there characterized will appear, not only from the *things themſelves* that are ſaid of him, and which I have already noted, (*viz.*) his *Conſcience being awaken'd, but his practice ſtill enſlaved*, which is the very ſtate of *midling ſinners*; but alſo from the whole *order* and *deſign* of that *ſeventh* Chapter.

For the buſineſs which the Apoſtle drives at in the ſixth, ſeventh, and eighth Chapters, (to go no farther) of that Epiſtle, as any man that attentively peruſes them may plainly ſee, is this; (*viz.*) *To ſhew the* Jews *at* Rome *a double change, which they had come under by their becoming Chriſtians. One* was in their *ſubjection*, and the *other* in the conſequent of that, their *ſervice* and *obedience*.

One change he tells them is in their *ſubjection*; for *now they are not ſubject to, and under the Law of Moſes, but under the Grace and Goſpel of Chriſt*, chap. 6. verſ. 14, 15.

And upon that change in their *ſubjection*, there is likewiſe another change in their *ſervice*. For *now they ſerve not ſin as they did formerly*, but *they ſerve and obey God*, chap. 6. verſ. 15, 16, 17, 18; and chap. 7. verſ. 4, 5, 6.

And becauſe this ſeems to be a great reflexion upon the *Law of Moſes*, as if it *encouraged them in their ſins*, and *helped to make them ſinners*; this latter part, (*viz.*) *their being wrought into this change of ſervice by changeing*

ing their Maſter and Religion, he explains more fully.

For to take off all reproach from the *Law*, under which he had affirmed they *ſerved ſin*; he ſhews that the reaſon why they ſinned under it, was not the *ſinfulneſs* of the *Law* it ſelf, for *it is holy, and commands holineſs*, chap. 7. verſ. 12. but the *power* of their own *ſinfull luſts*, which were too ſtrong to be *corrected* and *reſtrained* by thoſe aids which it offer'd towards it, *verſ.* 11, 13, --23.

In the management, and evident proof whereof he ſhews *two* things:

One is the *goodneſs* and *innocence of the Law*, becauſe, ſo far as they were influenced by it, they were for that which is *good*. For their *mind* and *Conſcience*, wherein the Law was ſeated, did *approve* of it, and their *heart deſired* it, *chap. 7. ver.* 15, 16, 18, 22.

The other is the *weakneſs* and *inability* of that Grace, which was offered in the *Law* to work mens *reformation*, and to make this change in their ſervice and obedience. For *notwithſtanding it, they ſerved and obeyed ſin ſtill*, chap. 7. ver. 15, 19, 21, 23, 25.

Wherein yet to be more *particular*, he ſhows further that thoſe *good effects*, which the *Law* was able to work in them, were only in their *mind* and *conſcience*, chap. 7. ver. 15, 18, 22, 23. But that ſtill the Law in the Members proved all the while too ſtrong for it, and kept poſſeſſion of their *life* and *practice*, ver. 15, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25.

But then as for that *change in their ſervice*, which the Law of *Moſes* had not ſtrength enough to work in them; he ſhows that the Goſpel and Grace of Chriſt has wrought it effectually. For now, ſince they became *ſubject to him, they had thrown off the ſervice of ſin*, which the Law could not enable them to get quit of, and *had begun to ſerve and obey him*, chap. 7. ver. 25. and ch. 8. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, *&c.*

This is the Argument which the Apoſtle purſues, and the way wherein he manages it, as every man will perceive, who will be at the pains to peruſe thoſe three Chapters as I have pointed them out to him. So that as for all the *ineffective ſtriving*, and *ſinning with regret*, which is ſo often mentioned in the *ſeventh* Chapter; it belongs not to the *Apoſtle himſelf*, nor to any other *regenerate Chriſtian*, but only to a *midling Sinner* among the *Jews*, who is changed ſomething by *Moſes*'s *Law*, but not enough; and who is in a way to become a Child of Grace, although for the preſent he be a Son of Death and Hell.

This, I ſay, will appear to be the perſon, whom S. *Paul* ſets forth in that ſo much miſtaken *Chapter*, to any man who ſhall fairly conſider thoſe three Chapters, obſerving that help for the underſtanding of them, which I have already offered.

But becauſe this is a matter of higheſt importance, and I would not ſeem to ſhun any pains which may in probability make for the ſatisfaction of any, though but *one* ſingle man, concerning this neceſſity of an active obedience; I will here ſet down what I verily take to be the ſenſe of thoſe *three* Chapters (or ſo much at leaſt of the *ſixth* and *eighth* as makes for the underſtanding of the ſeventh) in this enſuing Paraphraſe. Which I hope will not be altogether unuſeful for common Readers, becauſe they will thereby ſee what, as I take it, is the Apoſtles meaning, in *full* and at *length* here, whenas they read it more *contracted* and *involved* in their *Bibles*.

And to take our riſe from thence, that being ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe, at the *fourteenth* Verſe of the *ſixth* Chapter thus the Apoſtle diſcourſes:

Chap. 6. Verſe 14. Hereafter now *you are not* in ſubjection *under the Law* of *Moſes*, *but under* the *Grace* and Goſpel of Chriſt.

But

But *what then? Shall we* ſerve *ſin, becauſe we are not under the Law* which condemns, though it cannot conquer it; *but under Grace*, which pardons it? *God forbid* that ever any of us, who are come now under the Goſpel which proffers pardon for ſins paſt, ſhould think of refuſing it all ſervice for the time to come; and continue ſtill to ſerve and obey ſin, as much, or more than we did under the weak aids of the Law before it came. That we ſhould continue to ſerve, by continuing to obey it, I ſay, For Chap. 6. 15. Verſe.

Know you not this, *That to whom you yield your ſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants you are to whom you obey?* So that there you will be judged to pay your ſervice where you pay your obedience, *whether* that be in the performance *of ſin, unto* the purchaſe of *death*; *or of obedience, unto* the obtaining of *righteouſneſs*. 16.

But whatever ſome licentious Renegado Chriſtians may think of obeying, and ſo ſerving ſin, after they have put themſelves under ſubjection to Chriſt, who proffers to pardon it for the time paſt, only that he may thereby encourage them to leave it for the future: yet *God be thanked that* you for your parts have quite other apprehenſions. For although indeed *you were* formerly, in your time of Judaiſm, and ſubjection to the Law of *Moſes, the ſervants of ſin: yet* now, ſince your coming into ſubjection, under Chriſt, *ye have*, together with your ſubjection, changed your ſervice alſo, and have *obeyed from the heart that* New Goſpel-*Form of Doctrin*, b *whereunto*, or into the hands whereof, *ye were delivered*, when you were exempted from all ſubjection to the Law. 17.

b εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε.

Being then, by this change of ſubjection from the Law, under which ſin had power, to Chriſt's Goſpel, which enables you to deſtroy it, *made free from* the ſervice of *ſin*; *ye became*, as the Subjects of Chriſt, ſo 18.

Chap. 6. likewiſe the *ſervants of righteouſneſs.* And for this change of your ſervice, together with the change of your ſubjection, there is all the reaſon in the World.

verſe 19. Whereof *I* will *ſpeak after the* moſt moderate expectations, and equitable *manner of men, becauſe of the infirmities of your Fleſh,* whereby I know you are diſabled from making ſuch high returns as the reaſon of the thing calls for. *For* this is the leaſt that the mildeſt man would require in this Caſe, and yet it is all that God exacts of you; *as ye have* formerly, when you were ſubject to the Law, under which ſin took ſo great advantage, *yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs, and to iniquity, unto* the bringing forth ſtill of more *iniquity; even ſo* in the ſame manner *now,* ſince you are become ſubject unto Chriſt, give the ſame fruits there of your ſubjection, and *yield your members ſervants to righteouſneſs, unto* the encreaſe of greater *holineſs.*

20. This, as I ſay, is no more than you did upon your ſubjection to the other. *For when ye were the ſervants of ſin,* and under ſubjection to his Law, *ye were free from* all that ſervice of *righteouſneſs,* which God expects of you now upon your ſubjection to a better Law.

21. And as this change of your ſervice, together with the change of your ſubjection, is moſt highly reaſonable; ſo let me tell you withal it is moſt beneficial. For when ye were ſubject to the Law, and thereby ſervants unto ſin; *what fruit had you then,* either in enjoyment or expectation, beſides death and diſgrace, *in thoſe things* and ſervices, *whereof you are* moſt juſtly *now aſhamed?* And not only ſo, *for* beſides that one effect of ſhame, there is moreover another *end of thoſe things,* and that *is death* too.

22. *But now* on the other ſide, *being,* by means of your ſubjection unto Chriſt, *made free from* the Law and Authority of *ſin, and become,* as it is meet for Subjects,

ſervants

ſervants unto God; you have your fruit at preſent *unto holineſs, and the end thereof* at laſt *everlaſting life.* Chap. 6.

This difference there is, I ſay again, between the fruits of your former ſubjection and ſervice, and thoſe at preſent. *For the wages of ſin*, to its Subjects and Servants, *is death; but the gift of God* to his, *is eternal life.* 23. verſe.

And this ſervice of God, which gets you right to eternal life, I muſt ſtill tell you is owing to your being freed from ſubjection to the Law, under which you ſerved ſin; and to your becoming ſubject unto Chriſt.

For in the firſt place, as for your being freed from ſubjection to the Law, and being now no longer under it; that is very plain. For *know you not*, my *Brethren*, (*for I ſpeak to them that know the Law*, or the nature and quality of thoſe Laws which give one perſon intereſt and power over another) *how that the Law*, when conſidered as a perſon that hath ſuch power, *hath dominion over a man* who is under it *as long as he liveth* indeed or as it liveth in force to bind him, but no longer. Chap 7. 1. verſe.

A mans ſubjection to a Law, is juſt like that of a Woman to her Husband; where, as we all know, the ſubjection ceaſeth, and all the Laws pertaining to it, when her Husband dyes whom ſhe was ſubject to. *For the woman which hath an Husband, is bound* indeed *by the Law* of that ſubjection *to her Husband as long as he liveth; but if the Husband be dead, ſhe is* then no longer ſubject, but *looſed from the Law* of wedlock made in favour *of her Husband*, as ſhe is from that ſubjection wherein it was founded. 2.

So then if while her Husband liveth, during whoſe life all the Laws of Wedlock belonging to that ſubjection are in force, *ſhe be married to another man; ſhe ſhall be* truly *called an adultereſs: but* on the other ſide, *if her Husband be dead*, that ſubjection, and all the Laws which could oblige her in it, are dead with him; and 3.

ſhe

Chap. 7. *ſhe is free from* the obligation of *that Law*, which forbid her to marry another upon pain of being accounted an Adultereſs; *ſo that ſhe is no Adultereſs* now, that Law being dead which made her ſo, *though ſhe be married to another man.*

Verſe 4. And this is juſt your Caſe, the Law of *Moſes*, which held you in ſubjection formerly, being dead and aboliſhed now by the Death and Doctrine of Chriſt; or you being dead to it, which comes to the ſame thing. *Wherefore, my Brethren, ye alſo*, as the woman is to the dead man (the Duties of this relation living or expiring at the ſame time on both ſides equally) *are become dead to the Law*, which was your former Husband, (unto which therefore now you are no longer ſubject) *by the body* and ſufferings *of Chriſt* crucified, who has abroga-
c Epheſ. 2. 15. Col. 2. 14, 16, 17. ted and *c* aboliſhed *Moſes*'s Law under which ſin reigned; which abolition of the Law he wrought for this end, *that ye*, by this death of it, being freed from all ſubjection to it, *might* now *be married*, and thereby become ſubject *to another, even to himſelf, who is raiſed*
d Mat. 28. 18. *from the dead* to a ſtate of *d* abſolute Authority and Dominion over us; to whom, I muſt tell you, we are eſpouſed for this purpoſe, *that* upon becoming his Subjects *we ſhould* be freed from our former ſinful ſervice; and, agreeable to our preſent ſubjection perform ſervice, or *bring forth fruit unto God.*

5. And this alteration of our ſubjection from the Law to himſelf, was neceſſary, as I ſaid, for this altering of our ſervice from ſin to righteouſneſs. Which is manifeſt from comparing what we were formerly, with what we are at preſent. *For when* formerly *we were in* ſubjection to the *Fleſh*, or Law of *Moſes* under which the Fleſh had ſo great advantage, we generally felt, as they do now who are ſtill under it, that *the motions of ſin, which were* occaſioned and ſtrengthened *by* the weakneſs and

and inability of the *Law*, which could not reſtrain them, *did work* ſuch ſervice and obedience to them *in our members* or bodily powers, as *to bring forth fruit unto death.* Chap. 7.

But now, upon our becoming ſubject unto Chriſt, *we are delivered from* the ſubjection of *the Law*, whoſe weakneſs gave ſin ſo great advantage over us, *that* Law, I ſay, *being* now *dead* and aboliſhed, *wherein*, whilſt we ſo ſerved ſin, *we were held* in ſubjection; which deliverance is vouchſafed us, as I ſaid, for this end, *that* being made, not the Laws, but Chriſts Subjects now, *we ſhould* anſwerably to that *ſerve in newneſs of Spirit*, or in ſuch ſort as the new Spirit and Grace of his Religion enables us, *and not* as we ſerved formerly, under our ſubjection to the Law, *in the oldneſs of the letter*, or in thoſe weak and ineffective degrees whereto the helpleſs letter of the old Law could aſſiſt us. 6. Verſe.

But upon what I ſay of this change of ſervice from ſin to God (which we have all felt upon our becoming Chriſtians) being an effect of this change of ſubjection from the Law to Chriſt; ſome of you, 'tis like, may think, that the Law, which I affirm we ſinned under, is aſperſed and reproached by me, and thus object: *What* e *ſay we then? Is the Law*, under which you ſay we ſinned ſo much, and from which being now delivered, we have ceaſed to ſerve ſin, the cauſe of *ſin* to them who live under it? Now to this I muſt anſwer. *God forbid* that any man ſhould either ſay, or think ſo. No, we ſerved ſin under the Law, but yet the Law was no cauſe of ſin. And both theſe all they who live under it feel in themſelves, and muſt acknowledge. To avoid offence, ſuppoſe that I my ſelf were this Subject of the Law now, as I was formerly; 'tis very true, as I have ſaid, that I do ſerve ſin under it; but is the Law the cauſe of it? By no means. *Nay*, ſo far is 7. e τί ἐροῦμεν;

the

Chap. 7. the Law from cauſing or encouraging ſin in me, that, on the contrary, it points it out to me, and forbids it. *I had not known* what things are *ſin, but by the* help of *the Law* which ſhews it; *for I had not known luſt* or *concupiſcence* for inſtance, which is only in the heart, and not in the outward action, to be a ſin, *except the Law* of the tenth Commandment *had ſaid* expreſly, *thou ſhalt not covet.*

Verſe 8. *But* for all the Law both ſhews and prohibits ſin, and ſo can contribute nothing to produce, but rather to deſtroy it: yet I muſt truly tell you ſtill, that, whereas Sin has other cauſes more than enow, that are ſufficient to produce it; the Law is ſo weak and imperfect, as not to be able to hinder it. For in this inſtance of Concupiſcence eſpecially, whereto in the Law there is no expreſs puniſhment threatned, the ſinfull inclinations of our fleſh, which are cauſe enough of all ſin, grow bold, and, hearing of no expreſs threatning from it, will not be reſtrained by it. And by this means, the *Sin* of Concupiſcence *taking occaſion* from the impunity *of the Commandment*, inſtead of being reſtrained by it, took liberty and preſumed upon it; and ſo without all fear *wrought* and accompliſhed, or brought on to *e* compleat action and practice, *in me all manner of concupiſcence.* And ſeeing the Law only forbid, but could not reſtrain it, it helped on in the end rather to make, and let me ſee my ſelf to be a ſinner, than to deliver me from ſin; *for without the* promulgated *Law, Sin was* almoſt *dead*, being both little in it ſelf, and leſs upon the Conſcience. For the leſs knowledge there is of the Law, the leſs is there of ſin in tranſgreſſing it, and alſo the leſs ſenſe of it. And therefore, as I ſay, as for this inſtance of Concupiſcence, which I had not known to be a Sin unleſs the Law had told me ſo; without the Law I had neither offended

e Κατεργάσατο.

ſo

ſo highly in it, nor had ſo great a ſenſe of my offence. Chap. 7.

And this was found by experience in the men of our Nation. *For* any one of them, who was alive at the promulgation of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, might ſay: *I was alive* to my thinking, and as to great degrees of that guilt which I contracted afterwards, *without the Law once*, or before ſuch time as it was there proclaimed to us: for till then I knew not luſt to be a ſin, and ſo, by reaſon of my ignorance, neither ſinn'd ſo much in it, nor was ſo ſenſible of it as now I am; *but when the Commandment came*, and was plainly made known to me by *Moſes*; *then Sin*, I ſay, which was only ſhewn and forbid, but could not be reſtrained by it, *revived*, and begun to have the fulneſs of guilt and terrour in it, *and I*, thenceforward, being warn'd againſt it, and not being able to keep back from it, became liable to that death which is the wages of it, and *died* by it. 9. Verſe

And thus *the* Law or *Commandment*, *which was* not only holy, and innocent in it ſelf, but moreover intended by God for my good, and *ordained to life*, which it promiſed could I have obeyed it; *I* notwithſtanding *found to be unto death* to me, becauſe that became my due when I ſinn'd againſt it. 10.

Not as if the Law can be ſaid to be the Author of death to me, more than it is of ſin in me: For it was aim'd to deſtroy ſin, which it ſhews and forbids; and to procure life, which it offers and promiſes. But the true cauſe of this effect ſo contrary to its intention, (*viz.*) its producing Sin and Death, when as it was ordained to Holineſs and Life, is its being as I ſaid before, weak, and unable by all its aids to conquer fully, and reſtrain that Sin which brings Death upon us; for it cannot ſubdue, but only ſhew and forbid it. And therefore our habitual Luſts finding themſelves too ſtrong for it, burſt through it, and, in ſpite of all its reſtraint, 11.

Chap. 7. reſtraint, make us commit the one, and ſo become liable to the other. *For* in very deed it is not the Law, which is the cauſe of Death to me, but *Sin* it ſelf, which, *taking occaſion* or advantage *by the* literal and fancied impunity of the tenth *Commandment*, *deceived me* through a falſe hope into the commiſſion of it; and *by it* made me in reality liable to that Death, which is truly the wages of it, or in a word, *ſlew me.*

Verſe 12. *Wherefore* notwithſtanding we ſinn'd, yea, and died alſo during our ſubjection under the Law; yet for all that neither can our Sin, nor our Death be charged upon the Law it ſelf; becauſe, inſtead of contributing to them, it tends to deſtroy them, by expreſly forbidding the one, and offering to deliver us from the other. And therefore as for this Difficulty that was made at the ſeventh verſe againſt my ſaying, that we ſerved Sin under the Law, (*viz.*) its following thence that the Law was the cauſe of our Sin and Death; this we ſee is quite taken off, and doth not follow at all. For although we ſinn'd, yea, and died too under the Law; yet was not the Law the cauſe of theſe, but the ſtrength of our own Luſts. But *the Law is holy* ſtill, and ſo no cauſe of ſin; *and the Commandment* forbidding ſin, and promiſing Life to the obedient, is not only *holy*, *and juſt*, but over *and* above that *good* too, and ſo no cauſe of death and ſuffering.

13. But upon this you will ſay how *was* it *then*, that *that which is* ſo *good* in it ſelf, as you ſay the Law is, ſhould be *made* the cauſe of the greateſt evil, even of *Death unto me?* Could it prove ſo to me, if it were not ſo in it ſelf? And to this I anſwer with abhorrence, *God forbid* that I ſhould ſay the Law is Death. No, this Death, as I have told you, is not the effect of the Law, for it was ordained to procure Life for me. *But* it was *Sin*, I ſay again, that was too ſtrong for the Law, which could only

only forbid, but was not able by all its aids to reſtrain it; this Sin it was, *that it might appear Sin* indeed, that went on *working* tranſgreſſion *unto Death in me*, by advantage taken over *that* Law *which is good*, although not ſtrong enough to overpower the ſetled habits of evil. And by this conqueſt of Sin over the good Law, which was ſet up as a bar againſt it, and ſhould have deſtroy'd it, it appears to be moſt miſchievous. For this comes of it, *that Sin, by* proving too hard for *the Commandment, might* by ſuch prevailing over all that is ſet againſt it, be extremely heightned and aggravated, and *become exceeding ſinful.* Chap. 7.

And that the Law ſhould thus be worſted by Sin is no wonder. *For we know, that although the Law*, which commands, *is ſpiritual*, to ſhew and ſuggeſt better things; *yet I*, who am to obey, in that ſtate of ſenſuality and ſin, wherein the Law finds me, and out of which it is too weak to reſcue me, *am carnal*, ſo as to ſerve ſin notwithſtanding it. Which I am to ſuch a degree, as if I were *ſold under ſin*, and my actions were as much at its command, as the actions of a ſlave bought with money are at the command of his maſter. So that although the Law ſhews me that which is good, and commands me to perform it; yet cannot I obey it, in regard I am under anothers power, under the beck of ſin. 14. Verſe.

And in very deed, to ſpeak yet more particularly to this buſineſs, the good Law can, and doth produce good effects in the mind and conſcience, which is the throne wherein it is ſeated; but ſtill the law of ſin, which is ſeated in the members or executive powers, prevails over it, and engroſſeth all our actions: So that the utmoſt that it can ordinarily do with us, is to make us in our mind to diſapprove ſin; but when it hath done that, it cannot hinder us in our lives from pra- 15.

Chap. 7. ctiſing it. And of this the complaints of thoſe, who are ſubject to it, are a ſufficient proof. *For* who is there among them, for the moſt part, that is not ready to confeſs and cry out thus, *that which* through the prevailing power of my luſts *I do* in my practice; that, through the power of the Law, *I allow not* in my mind and conſcience: *for what*, being excited by the Law, *I would* do; *that*, being hindred by ſin, *do I not*; *but what*, from the Laws prohibiting, in my mind *I hate* and diſapprove; *that*, from my own luſts forcing and overpowering me, in my actions ſtill *do I*.

Verſe. 16. And this by the way, as it is an evident argument of the weakneſs and inability of the Law to reſtrain ſin; is alſo a clear teſtimony to the holineſs and goodneſs of the Law it ſelf, which ſhews plainly that it is no favourer, or author of Sin, as was objected, *verſ.* 7. Becauſe *if* even *then* when I do ſin, I do not approve of it, but in doing ſo, *I do what I would not*; *I* thereby *conſent* in my own conſcience *unto the Law*, and acknowledge, by my approving what it commands, *that it is good*. Yea, I ſhew moreover, that all that, which it produces and effects in me, is good alſo. For even when I do ſin, ſinning thus againſt my conſcience, the ſin cannot in any wiſe be charged upon my conſcience where the Law reigns, ſo as that the Law *in* my mind may be ſtiled the cauſe of ſin, as it is *verſ.* 7. but only upon the power of my habitual ſin and fleſhly luſts that reign in my members, which are ſo ſtrong, as that the law of my mind cannot reſtrain them.

17. And *now then*, (in this ſtate of ſinning thus with regret, and againſt my conſcience) even when I do ſin, *it is no more I*, (or my mind and conſcience that is governed by the Law, and which may be called my ſelf) *that do it*, ſeeing it diſapproves it; *but* it is *ſin that dwells in me*, and reigns in my members.

It

It muſt not be charged upon the Law in my mind, I ſay, but upon this inhabiting Sin which rules in my members. *For I know*, and confeſs freely *that in* that other part of *me*, that is to ſay *in my fleſh* and members, (which for all the Law rules in my mind, doth yet keep poſſeſſion of my practice) *dwells no good thing*. Nay, on the contrary, there dwells ſo much evil, as proves too ſtrong for the good Law, reſtraining all its effect to the approbation of my mind, but not ſuffering it to influence my practice. Which we, as I ſaid, who are ſubject to the Law, find by ſaid experience. *For* almoſt every one of us feels, and muſt confeſs this, that *to will* upon the account of the Law, *is preſent with me*; *but* then *how to perform that which is good* after I have will'd it, that *I find not*. Chap. 7. 18. Verſe

For after the Law has done all that it can upon me, this is ſtill true, that *the good, that*, being inſtructed by the Law, *I would* do; that, being hindred by the prevalence of my luſts, *I do not: but* as for *the evil, which*, becauſe of the prohibition of the Law, I *would not* do; *that*, being over-maſter'd by my luſts, *I do*. 19.

But *now* all this while, as a I ſaid, *if* what my luſts make me practiſe, through the Law in my mind I do not approve; but in doing it, *I do that* which *I would not*; then 'tis clear, that my ſinning cannot be charged upon the Law, as it is *verſ* 7. becauſe it hinders it as far as it can. It cannot, I ſay, be attributed to that, for *it is no longer I*, or my mind and conſcience, *that do it*; *but* to the power of habitual Sin which the good Law cannot conquer, to that *ſin which dwells* and rules *in me*, *i. e.* in my bodily members. 20.

And therefore to ſumm up all, *I find* another *Law* in my members, oppoſite to the Law of God in my mind, which ſtrives againſt it, and prevails over it; and makes me practiſe contrary to what my mind approves. So 21.

that

Chap. 7. *that when*, being enclined by Gods Law, *I would do good*; then, being over-ruled by the law of ſin, I cannot, but *evil is* laid before me and *preſent with me.*

Verſe 22. Gods Law, I ſay, I ſerve with the mind. *For I delight in the Law of God after the inner man* of my mind and conſcience.

23. But all this while I only approve of it, but no more. For all the effect which it has upon me, is only to create a liking of it in my mind. *But* as for my practice and outward performance, it is under anothers power. For *I ſee another* oppoſite Law, (*viz.*) that of Luſt and Sin, which is ſeated *in my* bodily *members*, not only *warring againſt the Law of God in my mind*, but conquering alſo and prevailing over it, *bringing me into captivity*, that abſolute ſort of ſubjection and ſlavery, *to* practiſe *the Law of Sin*, *which is* ſeated *in my members.*

24. And ſince I am ſo far enſlaved to the *Law* of *Luſt* and *Sin* when the Law of God undertakes me, that even that Law it ſelf, which God has appointed for my remedy, is not able to reſcue and deliver me: I have too great reaſon to cry out, *O! wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me*, ſince this Law given me by *Moſes* is not able to do it, *from* the ſlavery and miſery of *this body of death.*

25. This indeed was our condition under the Law, which ſhews at once the Laws holineſs and goodneſs, and withall its inability and weakneſs; becauſe notwithſtanding it offer'd ſome Grace, yet was not that enough, but that during our ſubjection under it, we commonly ſerved ſin ſtill. But now as for that ſlaviſh ſervice of ſin, which a bare *Jew*, who has no other help againſt it but *Moſes*'s Law, complains of, and longs to be delivered from: that, as I told you at firſt, we Chriſtians, through the ſurpaſſing Grace of Chriſts Goſpel, are delivered from already. So that to ſuch a complaining

Jew

Jew as I have here perſonated, I *Paul* an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt can readily make anſwer. Alter your ſubjection, and you ſhall alter your ſervice too; for in becoming ſubject unto Chriſt inſtead of the Law, you ſhall become ſervants of God inſtead of ſerving ſin. *I thank God* there is a way now in Chriſt for ſuch deliverance, or, as it is read by ſome copies, * *the Grace of God* which comes *through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord* ſhall deliver you, although the Law could not which came by *Moſes*. But without this Grace, I muſt ſtill tell you that the Law it ſelf will not generally have any ſuch effect upon you; ſeeing, as I ſaid, it will only awaken your conſcience, but not reform your practice. *So then*, to ſhut up this Diſcourſe, this you muſt ſtill conclude upon, that whilſt you continue ſubject to the Law, you will ſerve ſin in your practice, however you may diſapprove it in your minds. For *I my ſelf*, or *the* † *ſame I* under the Law, who *with the mind*, as has been often obſerved, *ſerve*, in approving, *the Law of God*; do *yet with the fleſh*, ſo long as it has nothing elſe but the Law to reſtrain it, ſerve, in practiſing, *the Law of Sin*.

Chap. 7.

* *In exemp. Clarom.* 'tis not εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ, but χάρις τῷ θεῷ, which reading is alſo follow'd by the old Latin Verſion.

† αὐτὸς ἐγὼ.

But to return to what I ſaid, *verſ.* 5, 6. of the laſt Chapter, from whence we have hitherto diverted to anſwer this objection. I ſay having by this paſſage from ſubjection to the Law, to ſubjection unto Chriſt upon the Laws being aboliſhed, changed our ſervice together with our ſubjection, and become ſervants now, not unto Sin, but unto Chriſt: All we Chriſtians are ſafe from that *Death* which the *Law of the members brought forth fruit* to (*Chap.* 7. *verſ.* 5.) and have right to that *Eternal Life*, which as I ſaid, is the gift of God to all his ſervants (*Chap.* 6. *verſ.* 22. 23.) So that what reaſon ſoever a poor *Jew* under the Law, who ſerves and obeys Sin, may have to cry out of the body of Death: yet we Chriſtians, who began to ſerve God upon our becoming

Chap. 8. 1. Verſe.

Chap 8. becoming ſubject unto Chriſt, may comfort our ſelves to ſee that we are delivered from it. And *therefore* whatever there be to a ſtriving, but yet unconquering Jew, *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*'s Religion, becauſe they are ſuch *who* have changed their ſervice together with their ſubjection, and *walk not* now *after the Fleſh*, as they did formerly whilſt the Law held them in ſubjection, *but after the Spirit*.

Verſe 2. This change of ſervice, I ſay, is wrought in all true Chriſtians by the Law of Chriſt, although it could not generally be wrought in the *Jews* by the bare Law of *Moſes*. *For the Law* and power of the *Spirit of life* which is given to us *in Chriſt Jeſus*, and is expreſly pro-

* Luke 11.13. miſed in his * Religion though it were not in the Law of *Moſes* ; that enabling Spirit, I ſay, *hath made me* Chriſtian *free from the* ſo often mentioned *Law of ſin*, and from the puniſhment of it, *Death*.

3. *For what the Law* of *Moſes could not do* towards our deliverance from the ſervice of ſin, *in that it was* too *weak through* the overpowering wickedneſs of the Law of luſt in *the Fleſh* ; even that hath *God* done in *ſending his own Son* Jeſus Chriſt *in the likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh*,

† περὶ ἁμαρτίας. *and* in making him *a* † *Sacrifice for Sin*, that in his death he might found his own Religion, whereby he hath *condemned* and deſtroyed, what the Law of *Moſes* was overcome by, *viz.* the Law of *ſin* ſeated *in the Fleſh*.

4. So *that* by the help of Chriſts Law perfecting what the Law of *Moſes* wanted, *the righteouſneſs* which was ſhown to us and required of us in the Book *of the Law* of *Moſes*, *might be* performed & *fulfilled in us* Chriſtians, although it was not ordinarily in the bare *Jews*, becauſe we are ſuch, *who* being Chriſts Subjects, muſt be his Servants likewiſe, & in our works and practice *walk not after* the luſts

luſts of *the fleſh*, *but after* the motions of *the Spirit*.

Thus have I given a Paraphraſe upon this *involved*, and ſo much *miſtaken* Chapter. Wherein I have *largely*, and, as I hope, *truly* repreſented the Apoſtles *meaning*, his *deſign*, and *manner* of arguing in this place. In all which we ſee he intends not at all to give a Character of *himſelf*, or of any other *regenerate* man, but only of a *midling* Sinner, who ſins againſt his Conſcience, and tranſgreſſes with reluctance. Which Tranſgreſſor of a middle rank, he particularly repreſents under the perſon of an *awaked*, but as yet *unregenerate Jew*; who was one on whom the Law of *Moſes* had wrought ſome change, but could not work enough; being able only to *awaken* his *Conſcience*, but not to *reform* his *practice*.

So that all that is there ſaid in that ſeventh Chapter of *willing* but not *performing*, &c only ſets off the *weakneſs* and *imperfection* of the *Law of Moſes*, as to the making men *compleatly obedient*; and the *perfection*, as to this particular, of the Law of Chriſt.

The Law of *Moſes* was unable to work a general reformation by reaſon of ſeveral defects, *two* whereof I ſhall particularly mention, which in the Religion of Chriſt are fully ſupplied; and they are the *great motive* to all *obedience*, *eternal life* and the *great encouragement* of all *endeavour*, *the promiſe of the Spirit*.

Eternal life are words that are never heard of in all *Moſes's Law*. Indeed the good people under it, had all ſome rude thoughts and *confuſed expectations* of it; but the *Law* it ſelf did no where *clearly* and *expreſly propoſe* it. Whereof this may ſerve for a *probable proof*, becauſe a *whole Sect* among them, the *Sadducees* I mean, did *flatly deny* it; and this for an *undeniable Argument*, becauſe thoſe *very* * *places* of the Law, which are

* Such as *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. *Ye are the Children of the Lord your God, ye ſhall not cut your ſelves for the dead.* Which, ſay they, were rather to be done for that reaſon of their being Gods Children and a Kings Son, were it not for the bleſſed Immortality of the departed Soul which this reaſon ſuggeſts to them. Such alſo are

Deut. 32. 39, 47. *Deut.* 4. 4, *&c.* All which muſt be brought about to ſpeak it by Rabbinical Art, and unwonted fetch of conſequence. See *Witneſs to Chriſt*, *par.* 2. *chap.* 13.

brought to *confirm* it by thoſe Jewiſh Doctors that are moſt for it, are in all appearance ſo remote from it. Nay even our Saviour himſelf, when he goes to prove it againſt the Sadducees out of the Books of *Moſes*, can find no other Teſtimonies for it, than ſuch as are fetched about to ſpeak it by art, and brought to it by conſequence, *Luke* 20. 37, 38. So that well might S. *Paul* ſay in triumph over all other Religions in the World, That *life and immortality were brought to light by the Goſpel*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. And in the compariſon of that *Covenant* which came by *Moſes* with that *other* which came by *Chriſt*; to affirm that the *Covenant which came by Chriſt* was *the bringing in of a better hope*, Heb. 7. 19; and a *better Covenant*, for this reaſon, becauſe *it was eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes*, Heb. 8. 6.

And then as for the *promiſe of the Spirit* to enable men to do what was required of them; of that *Moſes* made no mention. *By his Law*, as S *Paul* ſays, *was the knowledge of ſin*, Rom. 3. 20. It ſhewed men what they ſhould do, and denounced a * Curſe upon them if they failed to do it; but it ſtopt there, and went not on to promiſe any inward Grace and help, that might enable them to be as good as it required them. No, the promiſe of *that* was reſerved to another diſpenſation, and to be the *hope* of a *better Covenant*; it was not to come by *Moſes*, but by *Chriſt*; nor to be an expreſs Article of the *Law*, but of the *Goſpel*. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the Law*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *that* now, being under the Goſpel, *we might receive the promiſe of the Spirit*, which comes not by the Law of *Moſes*, but *through* the *Faith* of Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 13, 14. The *Law*, by its prohibition, *made* ſeveral actions to be ſinful, it *ſhewed* us what was ſin, and it threatned the *curſe* to it; but that was all that it did towards the extirpation of it; for, as for any *inward*

* Gal. 3 10.

ſtrength

ſtrength and ability to overcome it, it offered none, but left us there to our own ſelves. And becauſe ſin was too *ſtrong* for us, and had got poſſeſſion of our *Bodies* and *executive Powers*, inſomuch that we were quite *enſlaved* to it, and as it were *ſold under* it: therefore the Law, by making *more* things ſinful through its *prohibition*, and not *ſtrengthening us* againſt ſin through *ſpiritual aſſiſtance*, inſtead of *leſſening* the Empire of ſin, proved in the end to *encreaſe* it. For our luſts not being reſtrained by it, and more of them becoming ſinful by being prohibited; *when the Law entred*, as S *Paul* ſays, *the offence did more abound*, Rom. 5. 20; and the Law became, not the bane and overthrow of ſin; but, by making its ſervices more numerous, it was rather, as the ſame Apoſtle ſays, *the ſtrength of it*. 1 *Cor.* 15. 56. And foraſmuch as the Law did only thus outwardly ſhew and reveal ſin to our eyes, but brought along with it nothing of inward Grace and aſſiſtance to help us againſt it; therefore is it called a *Letter without us*, oppoſite to the Grace of the Goſpel, which is an *enlivening Spirit* within us. And ſince it did nothing more but outwardly ſhew and threaten ſin, but did not inwardly aſſiſt and reſcue us from it; it ſerved only to condemn us for what we did, from the doing whereof it brought no inward Grace to hinder us; and ſo proved the *miniſtration of death* and *condemnation*, not of *life* and *pardon*. All which is plainly affirmed of it in the *third* Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians. *God*, ſays S *Paul*, *hath made us* Apoſtles *miniſters of the New Teſtament*, or * Covenant, *not of the* external *Letter* only, as *Moſes* and the Miniſters of the Law were; *but of the* internal *Spirit* alſo. *For the Letter* or old Law ſhews ſin, and curſes men upon the breach of that which they cannot keep, and thereby *kills* them; *but the Spirit* or new Law enables them to do what it commands,

* διαθήκης.

mands, and thereby *giveth* right to *live*, which is the mercy that it promiſes. That was *the miniſtration of condemnation*; for it ſhewed men the curſe, which it did not enable them to ſhun: this is *the miniſtration of* juſtification and *righteouſneſs*, which it both promiſes, and enables them to attain to, *ver.* 6, 7, 8, 9.

'Tis very true indeed, that ſeveral of the *Jews* themſelves under the *Law of Moſes*, had really ſuch aſſiſtances of *Gods Spirit*, as enabled them to *do*, as well as to *know* what was required of them. For *David* in all his life and behaviour was *a man after Gods own heart*, 1 *Sam.* 13. 14. *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth* as to their *walking in all the Commandments of the Lord, were blameleſs*, Luke 1. 9. And the Caſe was the ſame with a number of other *honeſt* and *godly Jews*.

But then this aſſiſtance which they enjoyed, was no *Article* of their *Law*; although God afforded it, yet had their Law no where promiſed it, nor was he bound to it by the *Moſaical Covenant*. For in very truth all this *inward Spirit* which was vouchſafed to them, was reached out, not by virtue of the *Covenant of the Law*, but of the *Covenant of Grace*. For the *Covenant of Grace* was not *firſt* made with the World when Chriſt came into it, but was eſtabliſhed long before with *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15; and after that confirmed again with *Abraham*, and all his *Seed* after him, *Gen.* 12. 3. *Gal.* 3. 8, 17. So that under *it*, as well as under *Moſes*, all the *Jews* lived; and by the *gracious* terms and aſſiſting *Spirit* of it, all the righteous people, that have been ſince the beginning of the World, were juſtified. It being, as S. *Paul* ſays, *by faith*, which is the righteouſneſs of the ſecond Covenant, that *the Elders*, who lived before the Law, *obtained a good report*, Heb. 11. 2, and that the *Jews*, who lived under it, *were* delivered and *juſtified from all things, from which they could* * *not be juſtified*.

* Gal. 3. 9, 10, 11, 12.

ſtified by any virtue of *the Law of Moſes*, Acts 13. 39. And therefore that which the Apoſtle affirms of the defectiveneſs of the Moſaick Law, *viz. its having no promiſe of the Spirit to enable men to do what it commanded*, is true ſtill. For the Law did not promiſe it, although ſeveral both *before*, and *under* the Law enjoyed it: but they who had the benefit of it, received it, not from the *Covenant of the Law*, but from the *Covenant of Grace* and *the Goſpel*, which has been more or leſs on foot through all times, ever ſince the World began.

And in this *Covenant*, ſince Chriſt has given us the laſt Edition and perfection of it, *both* theſe great defects of the *Moſaick* Law, which rendered it ſo unable to work this intire reformation and obedience, are fully ſupplied. For in every Page of Chriſt's Goſpel, what is ſo legible as the *promiſe of eternal life?* The joys of *Heaven* are as much inſiſted on by *Chriſt*, as the delights of *Canaan* were by *Moſes*. And then as for the other *promiſe*, viz. that of *the Spirit*; it is now as plainly revealed, as words can make it. For we need not to *gueſs* at it by *ſigns*, or to *preſume* it from *probabilities*, or to *believe* it upon *Syllogiſm* and *conſequence*: but Chriſt has *ſpoke* out, ſo as to be underſtood by every capacity, ——*God will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 13.

Now becauſe the Law of *Moſes* laboured under theſe *two* great defects, which are happily ſupplied by the Goſpel of Chriſt, by reaſon whereof it was very unable to effect that reformation of the World which was neceſſary; therefore doth the Apoſtle, in ſeveral places, ſpeak very meanly of it, as of a *weak* and *ineffective* Inſtrument. He affirms plainly, and proves alſo, That it neither *could*, nor *did* make men throughly good; and that therefore God was forced in the fulneſs of time to make *known*, and, in Chriſt's death to *eſtabliſh* a *better*.

If

If there had been a Law given by *Moſes*, *which could have given life*, *then*, ſaith he, *verily righteouſneſs ſhould* not have needed to be ſought by another Covenant, but *have been by the Law*. *But* this we ſee it could not, for *the Scripture hath concluded all* thoſe, who lived under it, *to be* ſtill *under* the dominion of *ſin*, *that* ſo, ſince the Law of *Moſes* could not do it, *the promiſe* of eternal life, of the Spirit, and of other things which we have *by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt*, *might be given* to work and effect it *to thoſe that believe*, Gal. 3. 21, 22. Something indeed the Law did towards it, for it armed their *conſciences* againſt ſin, ſo that they could not take their full ſwing, and tranſgreſs without all fear and remorſe. And this was ſome reſtraint, and kept them from being ſo ill by far as otherwiſe they would have been, although it was not able to make them ſo good as they ſhould. And to lay this hank upon ſin, and to check it in ſome meaſure, till ſuch time as the Goſpel ſhould be more clearly revealed to ſubdue it perfectly, was that very end for which the Law was at firſt given, and whereto, ſo long as it was in force, it ſerved. *Wherefore*, ſaith he, *ſerveth the Law* of *Moſes*? *It was added* to the rude draught of the Goſpel-Covenant made with *Abraham*, *becauſe of* the *tranſgreſſions* of men which grew very high that it might in ſome degree reſtrain them, *till* Jeſus Chriſt *the ſeed* of *Abraham ſhould come*, *to whom*, as to the head and in behalf of his Church, *the promiſe* of ſuch Grace as would reſtrain it fully *was made*. *And* to fit it the more for imprinting an awe upon peoples Conſciences, whereby it might lay this reſtraint upon ſin, *it was ordained* at the firſt giving of it, *by* terrible fire and thundrings made by the *Angels*, which were ſo dreadful, that the people deſired of God that thoſe formidable Angels might be no more employed in delivering it to them, but that it might

might be put *into the hands* of *another Mediator*, (viz) *Moſes*, who was a man like unto themſelves, *Gal.* 3. 19. But although this reſtraint upon Sin were ſomething, yet was it far from ſufficient; ſo that ſtill it is true of *the Law* of *Moſes*, that notwithſtanding it could begin, yet it could finiſh and *make nothing* * *perfect*; *but* that it was *the bringing in of a better hope* than was warranted by the Law, which ſhould *do* that, *Heb.* 7. 19. And as for this imperfection and faultineſs, which the Apoſtle impures to the *firſt Covenant* or *Law of Moſes* in theſe, and other places; it is nothing more, as he obſerves, than God himſelf has charged upon it, when he ſpeaks of eſtabliſhing a better inſtead of it. *For if the firſt Covenant* by Moſes *had been faultleſs*, and void of imperfection; *then ſhould no place have been ſought for* the introduction of *the ſecond*, which it is plain there was. *For finding fault with them* for their breach of the firſt Covenant, *he ſaith* (in Jer. 31. 31.) *the dayes come when I will make a New Covenant with the houſe of Iſrael*, ſuch as ſhall make *me* to be for ever *unto them a God*; and enable *them to be unto me* an obedient *People*, Heb. 8. 7, 8, 9, 10.

* Galat. 4. 9.

Now this *Inability* of the Law of *Moſes* to work a compleat conqueſt over ſin, and a thorow reformation, which the Apoſtle affirms ſo clearly in theſe *other* places, he ſets out more *largely* and *particularly* in that *ſeventh* Chapter to the *Romans*. For from the beginning of this Diſcourſe, which I have taken at the 14 *th Verſe* of the *6th Chapter*, to the end of it at the 5*th verſe* of the 8*th*; this weakneſs and inability of the Law, is that ſtill which is every where endeavour'd to be made out, and which returns upon us as the concluſion and inference from every argument. *Sin muſt not have dominion over you*, ſaith he, *becauſe you are not under the Law*, where is the place of its reigning, *but under* the *Grace*

of

of Christ, at the 14. *verse* of the *6th Chapter*. And in the *7th* it is taken notice of at every turn. *When you were in the flesh* (or under the Law, which, from its consisting so much of *Carnal Ordinances*, and giving the *flesh* so much *advantage*, is called *flesh*, Galat. 3. 3.) *the motions of sin, which were* encouraged *by the* weakness of the *Law, brought forth fruit unto death: but now being delivered from the* weak *Law, you serve in newness of spirit, not* as you did then, *in the oldness of the letter*, verſ. 5, 6. *Sin taking occasion* or advantage over *the* weak *Commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*, verſ. 8. *When the* weak *Commandment came, sin revived, and I died*, verſ. 9. *Sin taking occasion* or advantage *by the Commandment, slew me*, verſ. 11. by which prevailing over the Commandment, it appears to be *exceeding sinfull*, verſ. 13. And at the end of the discourse at the *8th Chapter*, we are told again of the *Law* of *Moses being weak through* the conquering power of *the flesh*, which made it necessary for *God to send his own Son* with a better Law, which was strong enough to rescue us out of the dominion of it, *verſ.* 3, 4.

So that upon the whole matter it plainly appears, that all that is said in that seventh *Chapter*, of *willing* but *not doing*, of *sinning against conscience*, and *transgressing with regret*; doth not at all set forth the *savable state* of *a true Christian* under the *Gospel* of *Christ*; but only the state of a *midling sinner*, of a *lost Jew*, who only struggles but cannot conquer, being yet under the weakness and imperfections of the *Mosaick Law*.

Nay, I add further, So far is any man, who continues *to work* and *act his sin*, from having any real grounds of *hope*, and encouragement from *this place* in so doing: that in very deed, if he rightly consider it, it will possess him with the quite contrary. It holds out

out to him a ſentence of death, and ſhews him plainly the abſolute neceſſity, not only of a *willing*, but alſo of a *working* obedience. For the man who *diſobeys* thus *unwillingly*, and *ſins with regret*, is ſo far from being in a ſtate of *Life* and *Salvation* notwithſtanding his ſins, that he is here expreſly ſaid to be *undone* and *ſlain* by them. *The motions of ſin under the law bring forth fruit unto death*, verſ. 5. *when ſin revived by the coming of the Commandment, I died*, verſ. 9. *The Commandment which was ordained unto life*, I on the contrary, *found to be unto death*, verſ. 10. *Sin taking occaſion* and advantage *by the Commandment, ſlew me*, verſ. 11. *Sin wrought death in me by that* Law, *which is good*, verſ. 13. *O! wretched man that I am* by reaſon of this ſubjection unto ſin, *who ſhall deliver me from this body of* Sin and *Death?* verſ. 24.

But on the other ſide, if we would belong to Chriſt, and appear ſuch Servants as he will own and reward at laſt; we are taught in this very place, that we muſt *not be worſted by ſin*, but *overcome* it; that we muſt *not work evil*, but *righteouſneſs*; that we muſt not *walk after* thoſe *ſinfull luſts* which are ſeated *in the fleſh*, but *after the Law of God* which is enthroned in the *Spirit*. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you if you are under Grace*, Chapter 6. 14. *Now yield your members ſervants unto righteouſneſs*, verſ. 19. *you are* become ſubject, and as it were *married to Chriſt, that you ſhould bring forth fruit to God*, Chap. 7. verſ. 4. *Now being delivered from the Law, we muſt ſerve*, not ſin, as we did under it, but God *in newneſs of ſpirit*, verſ. 6. *The Grace of God through Jeſus Chriſt* hath delivered me *from this body of death*, verſ. 24, 25. *The Law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus*, when I became truly and acceptably Chriſtian, *hath made me free from the law of Sin and Death*, Chap. 8. verſ. 2. *So that the righteouſ-*

neſs of the Law, which it was not able to work in me, *is* now, by means of the Goſpel, wrought and *fulfilled in me*; for ſince I came under it, I am one *who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*, verſ. 4.

So that all the while we ſee, this is a Truth moſt ſure and ſtedfaſt, which S. *Paul* is ſo far from *oppoſing* in this *ſeventh* Chapter to the *Romans*, that in reality he *avers* and *confirms* it, (*viz.*) that *if we do commit ſin and work iniquity, it will not excuſe us to ſay that we did it unwillingly*. The *regret* in ſinning may be allowed, as was ſhewn in the *laſt* Chapter, to *leſſen* our *crime*, and thereby to abate our *puniſhment*; but that is all which it can do, for it cannot *quite* exempt us from it.

And thus at laſt we ſee, that this *fourth* ground of ſhifting off the neceſſity of this *ſervice with our actions*, (viz.) our *hope of being ſaved at the laſt day, although we have not obeyed in our works, but have wrought diſobedience, becauſe when we did ſo, it was with reluctance and unwillingneſs*; is no leſs deluſive than are all the *former*. It will certainly fail any man who truſts to it, and, if he will not ſee it before, make him know the falſeneſs of it, when it is too late to rectifie and amend it.

As for all thoſe foundations therefore whereupon men build their hopes of a happy ſentence, without ever obeying with their *ſtrength* or *bodily powers*, (viz.) the conceit of being ſaved for *Orthodox Opinions*, for *ineffective deſires*, for *never tranſgreſſing but through a ſtrong temptation*, or *with an unwilling mind*: they are all falſe grounds, ſnares of death, and inlets to damnation.

But as ever we expect that our obedience ſhould avail us unto *Pardon* and *Life*, we muſt obey with our *ſtrength* or *bodily powers*, as well as with our *wills*, our *paſſions*, and our *underſtandings*. If we would have God

God at the laſt day to *approve* our *ſervice*, and to *reward* and *juſtifie* our *obedience*, *this*, and nothing leſs than this, muſt be done towards it. We muſt not only *deſire*, but *do*; it is not enough to *will* and *approve*, but we muſt *work* and *practiſe* what is commanded us. We muſt not barely think right in our *minds*, or *deſire* with our *affections*, or *chooſe* with our *wills*; but, as the *Perfection* and *crown* of all, we muſt put to our *ſtrength* and *executive powers*, and *work* the will of God in our lives and actions. Without this, if we have *life* and *opportunity*, all other things will ſignifie nothing. For *it is he who doth good*, ſaith S. *John*, *who* will be looked upon to be *of God*, 3 Joh. 11. *Little children*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *let no man deceive you*, for it is only *he who** *doth righteouſneſs*, who in Gods judgement is *righteous*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. It is this ſervice of our *ſtrength* or *bodily powers*, in our outward works and operations, which makes up our duty, and ſecures our reward: *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments*, for they only *have right to* the great reward, *the Tree of Life*, Revel. 22. 14. * 1 Joh 2. 17. 29.

But on the other ſide, if we *do evil*, and *work iniquity*; no ſervice of our other faculties can ſtand us in any ſtead, but in Gods account we ſhall be eſteemed *wicked wretches*, *children of wrath*, and *heirs of deſtruction*. For the words of our Saviour Chriſt himſelf, who is to judge of it, are *vehement* and *plain*. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whoſoever committeth ſin is the ſervant of ſin*, Joh. 8. 34. *He who commits ſin is of the devil, for whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs is not of God, but a child of the devil*, 1 Joh. 3. 8, 10. And as this *working wickedneſs*, howſoever we are againſt it in our *thoughts* and *deſires*, makes us, in Gods account, *ſons of ſin* and *diſobedience*; ſo will it be ſure to render us withall *children of wrath* and *deſtruction*. *If you live*

after the flesh, saith S *Paul*, *you shall dye*, Rom. 8. 13. And whatever men think in their *minds*, or desire in their *hearts*, or profess in their *words* to the contrary; if for all that they have sinned impenitently in their actions, Christ has told them plainly that he will pronounce, when he comes to sit as their Judge, ——*Depart from me all ye that work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23

As for this fourth faculty therefore, our *strength* or *bodily powers*, in outward works and operations; it is one necessary ingredient of an *entire* obedience. The service of our works is indispensably required to our pardon and happiness, as well as the service of our minds, our wills, and our affections; so that as ever we hope to live, our obedient thoughts and desires must end in an obedient practice.

And thus at last we see what those *powers* or *faculties* are, whose concurrence in Gods Service is necessary to make up an *entire* obedience. We must obey all the *particular* Laws, that are recounted in the *former* Book, with our *whole* man, both with our *minds*, and *souls*, and *hearts*, and *strength*: all these several powers must unite in Gods Service, before it will be *upright* and *compleat*, such as at present his Law requires, and such as at the last day he will accept of.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the second sort of integrity, an integrity of times and seasons.

The CONTENTS.

Of the second sort of Integrity, viz. *that of Times and Seasons. Of the unconstancy of many mens obedience. Perseverance necessary unto bliss. The desperate case of Apostates, both as to the difficulty of their recovery from sin, and the greatness of their punishment.*

BUt besides the Integrity of our *powers* and *faculties*, or the *Integrity of the Subject*, whereof I have discoursed hitherto; there is *a second* sort of Integrity, which is plainly necessary to make our obedience available to our salvation at the last day; and that is an *Integrity of seasons and opportunities*, or our obeying the fore-mentioned Laws, not *now*, and *then*, but at *all times*.

We must not think to please God by an obedience that comes, and goes by *fits*; or by serving him only at such times, as we are in *humour*, or have no *temptation* to the contrary. But our service of him must be *constant* and *uniform*, we must obey him at *all* times, and *wilfully* transgress in *none*. For although all other things have their proper season, yet sin has not; it is *always* forbidden, and *always* threatned; so that *whensoever* we commit it, it puts us under the curse, and makes us liable to Death and Hell.

Some

Some indeed there are who *parcel* out their time, and divide it betwixt *God* and their *ſins*. They obſerve a *conſtant courſe* of *tranſgreſſing* and *repenting*, of *ſin* and *ſorrow*. For they are alwayes won when they are tempted, and they are alwayes ſorrowfull when they have done. They are all holy purpoſe, and good reſolution before they are tryed; but when the temptation comes, they can make but a poor reſiſtance; for all their good thoughts quickly vaniſh, and they are taken. They are never conſtant, either in pious purpoſing, or in well doing. Their actions are not all of a piece, but a medly of good and bad; for they ſtill keep on in an uninterrupted viciſſitude and ſucceſſion of works of obedience, and of ſin.

Others again there are who act more agreeably to themſelves, and, whilſt they are for God, are more *conſtant* in their obedience; who yet *fall* off at *laſt*, and *ſin* againſt him for *altogether*. For either they grow *faint* and *weary*, by the *tediouſneſs* and *length* of their *journey*; or they are turned out of the way, by ſome great *difficulties*; or drawn aſide, by the *importunate allurements* of ſome temptation: and when once, by *any* of theſe wayes, they are put beſide their duty, they turn their backs *thenceforward* upon God, and never more obey him. They are ſeduced by *ill company*, or drawn away by *intereſt*, or frighted by *perſecution*; and from that time their care ſlackens, and their luſts encreaſe, and grow too hard for Grace and the Goſpel. And thus, what from inducements from *within*, and what from occaſions from *without*, they are quite cut off from the ſervice of God and Religion, and give themſelves up to ſerve their luſts for altogether, and to an uninterrupted obedience of ſin.

But now, as for ſuch a *broken* ſervice and obedience as this, God will by no means accept of it, nor ſhall any man

man be ever the better by it. For when Chriſt comes to Judgment, he will paſs Sentence upon men according to what they are *then*, and not according to what they have been *formerly*. *If the righteous man turn away from his righteouſneſs*, ſaith *Ezekiel*, *and commit iniquity, and do according to all that the wicked man doth; ſhall he live?* No, by no means. For *all his righteouſneſs that he hath done* formerly *ſhall not be mentioned*, but *in his treſpaſs that he hath* ſince *treſpaſſed, and in his ſin that he hath ſinned; in them ſhall he dye*, Ezek. 18. 24. It is only *if you continue in my Word*, ſaith our Saviour, that *you are my Diſciples indeed*, John 8. 31. You muſt perſevere in obedience, if you expect to have the reward of it. For *he* only *who endures to the end ſhall be ſaved*, Matth. 10. 22; and none but *they, who by* PATIENT CONTINUANCE *in well doing ſeek for Glory and Immortality*, ſhall inherit *eternal life*, Rom. 2. 6. 7. Perſeverance is the indiſpenſable condition of bliſs, we cannot have it cheaper; *Be thou faithful unto death, and* then, ſaith Chriſt, *I will give thee a Crown of life*, Rev. 2. 10.

But as for all thoſe who fall off from a good courſe, and turn *Apoſtates* from obedience; their caſe is deſperate, and their condition extreamly damnable. For they grow wicked to the higheſt degree, and their ſtate is almoſt irrecoverable. They have, by their continued rebellion and provocations in ſpite of all the ſuggeſtions of Gods Grace, and the checks of their own Conſcience, not only *grieved*, but even *quenched* the Spirit of God. So that God, for the *moſt* part, leaves them to themſelves, and ſeeks no further to reduce them. For if men are *idle*, and will *not uſe* it; and much more if they ſcornfully caſt it from them, and *reject* it; Chriſt hath told us plainly, that the *Grace which* any one *hath ſhall be taken from him*, Matth. 25.

29. And when once God and his good Spirit have deſerted them, they are under nothing but an unbridled luſt, and run on, without all reſtraint, into an exorbitain pitch of wickedneſs.

And this any man may eaſily obſerve in the world. For who is uſually ſo *evil*, as the *backſliding* Sinner? Who is ordinarily ſo *irrecoverable*, as the *Apoſtate* Saint? They are quite loſt to all goodneſs, and ſin beyond all bounds and paſt all retrieve. No Creatures in the World were ever ſo much out of all capacity to be reſtored to Heaven, as thoſe Angels that fell from it; and no men on Earth are ſo hardly reclaimed from a wicked to a holy life, as they who once knew what it was, and yet utterly renounced it. For *God*, for the moſt part, lets them alone to enjoy their own choice, and to go on in their own way; and the *good Spirit*, which has been almoſt quenched by them, contends no more with them, nor acts any more upon them. They have trampled already upon all ſpiritual aids, and benummed and ſilenced their own Conſciences, and quite hardened themſelves in their wickedneſs; ſo that now they have nothing to hinder them, but advance to work all manner of ſin with greedineſs and wantonneſs, and thereby fall under the ſevereſt curſe, that can be met with in Hell and damnation.

And as for this progreſs of all Renegado Saints and revolting Sinners, both in ſin, and alſo in ſuffering; the Scripture is expreſs and plain. *When the unclean Spirit, which is* once *gone out of a man, returns into him again,* ſays our Saviour, *he taketh unto himſelf ſeven other Spirits,* which are *more wicked than* he *himſelf* is, *and they enter in, and dwell there: and the laſt ſtate of that man is* made *worſe* in all reſpects by this means, *than the firſt,* Matth, 12. 43, 44, 45. The man becomes a greater Sinner, and a greater Sufferer than otherwiſe he

he ever would have been. *For if after* men *have once escaped the pollution of the world, through the knowledg of Christ's* Gospel, *they are again entangled therein, and overcome* by it; then *is the latter end worse with them than the beginning. For it had* really *been* by much the *better for them, not to have known the way of righteousness* at all; *than, after they have known* and walked in *it,* to put such a slur upon it, and *to* revolt and *turn from the holy Commandment,* which was *delivered unto them,* and for some time embraced by them, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21.

As for an obedience then which goes but half way, and breaks off before it has got to the end: so far is it from availing us unto pardon and life, that in very deed it renders our present case more desperate, and our future punishment more insupportable.

But that obedience which God will accept, and in which alone we may safely place our confidence; must be, as of our *whole man,* so of our *whole time* likewise. We must persevere in it through all Seasons, and take care both to live and dye in it. For our reward will be dispensed out to us according to the nature of our service at the time of payment, and *he* only, as our Saviour says, *that endureth to the end shall be saved,* Matth. 10. 22.

CHAP. VI.

Of the third sort of integrity, viz. *that of the Object; or of obedience to all the particular Laws and parts of Duty.*

The Contents.

Of the partiality of mens obedience from their love of some particular sins. Three pretences whereby they justifie the allowed practice of some sins, whilst they are obedient in some other instances. The first pretence is the preservation of their Religion, and themselves in times of persecution. A particular account of mens disobedience under this pretence. The vanity of it shewn from the following considerations. Religion needs not to be rescued from persecution. The freedom of outward means of Religion is restrained by it, but the substance of Religion it self is not. It is extended in some parts, and ennobled in all by sufferings. Where it needs to be defended, disobedience is no fit means to preserve it, because God cannot be honoured, nor Religion served by it. Religion and the love of God is only the colour; but the true and real cause of such disobedience is a want of Religion, and too great a love of mens own selves. Men are liable to be deceived by this pretence from a wrong Notion of Religion for religious opinions and professions. A true Notion of Religion for religious practice upon a religious belief, as it implies both faith and obedience. The danger of disobedience upon this pretence. The practice of all religious men in this case. Of Religion in the narrow acceptation, for religious professions and opinions.

opinions. The commendable way of mens preſerving it. Firſt, *By acting within their own ſphere.* Secondly, *By the uſe only of lawful means.* Thirdly, *By a zeal in the firſt place for the practice of religious Laws, and next to that for the free profeſſion of religious opinions.*

BUT to render our ſervice perfectly *intire* and compleatly *upright*, it is not enough that there be an *integrity of the Subject*, by our obeying with all our powers; or an *integrity of time*, by our obeying in all Seaſons; of which *two* I have diſcourſed hitherto: but it is further neceſſary that there be an *integrity of the Object* alſo; or that what we do thus obey with our *whole man*, and our *whole time*, be nothing leſs than *all the particular Laws of Duty and inſtances of Obedience*; nothing under the *whole will of God.*

We muſt not *a* pick and chuſe in the doing of our Duty, for if we do not obey *all*, we obey not *b* right in any. Becauſe *all* the Laws of God are bound upon us by the ſame power, and enjoyned by the ſame Authority; ſo that if we fulfil any *one* upon this account, of *his having required it*, the ſame reaſon holds for our fulfilling *all* the reſt.

a *Neq; eſt juſta cauſatio cur præferantur aliqua, ubi facienda ſunt omnia.* Sal. de Prov. l. 3. p. 80. Ed. Oxon.

b *Si pro arbitrio ſuo Servi Dominis obtemperant, ne in iis quidem, in quibus obtemperaverint, obſequuntur. Quando enim Servus ex Domini juſſis ea facit tantummodo, quæ vult facere; jam non Dominicam implet voluntatem, ſed ſuam.* Id. p. 79.

This indeed is very hardly believed, becauſe it is ſo hard to practiſe. For almoſt every man has ſome ſin or other, which he can as well dye as part with: It has got his heart, and is become the Maſter of his affections; and ſince he loves it ſo dearly, he hopes that God will bear with it too. He will part with any thing elſe for Gods ſake, he will not ſtick at any other ſervice, nor repine at any other impoſition; all that he

craves is only to be tolerated in his Darling Luſt, and to be allowed to ſerve him without *cutting* off what is as uſeful as his *right hand*, or *pulling* out what is as dear to him as his own *right eye*, to pleaſe him.

And when men are thus deſirous of reconciling the ſervice of God with the ſervice of their luſts; when they are reſolved to hope, and yet reſolved to ſin: they have no other way but to perſwade themſelves that the keeping of *ſome* Precepts ſhall atone for the tranſgreſſion of *others*, and to bear up themſelves with the deluſive hopes and falſe confidences of a *partial*, and a *half obedience*. They preſently forge new terms of life and pardon, which God never made, and which he will never ſtand to: for finding that they do not perform all his laws, and yet reſolving that what they do perform ſhall be ſufficient for them; they ſtraightway fanſie that if they do keep *ſome*, for the *reſt* they ſhall have a Diſpenſation. It ſhall be enough for *them* to part with ſuch luſts for Gods ſake, as they can beſt ſpare; but *ſome* they will keep, and *them* he muſt allow; and ſo inſtead of a *perfect* and *intire*, they put him off with a *partial* and a *maimed* ſervice.

Now this partiality of obedience is in ſo many kinds, as men have ſins that are endeared to them, which they will not leave for God's ſake, but join with him For every beloved ſin can make an intereſt and Party, and if it reign in us ſo far as to make us fulfil it, and to diſobey in it, our obedience in other things is all that we have to ſhew beſides, and therefore it muſt be our excuſe for it.

And this being an errour of ſuch eternal moment, and a Rock whereupon all the ſouls, which miſcarry under any appearances of piety, are ſplit; I will be particular in recounting and evacuating thoſe colours and *pretences* wherewith men deceive their own ſouls, and

and think that they justifie and defend it.

Now as for those false grounds and pretensions, whereby men seek to shelter themselves under the practice of such bosome sins as they overlook, because they have no mind to leave them, hoping to be secured, whilst they continue in them, because of their obedience in other parts of Duty, which is a *partial obedience*: Those pretensions, I say, which are most pleadable in this matter, are these that follow, *viz.* because their indulgence of themselves in those instances wherein they disobey, is either upon *one*, or *more* of these accounts.

1. For *the preservation of their Religion, and of themselves*, in times *of danger and persecution.*

2. For *the supply of their necessities*, by *sinful arts, compliances*, and *services*, in times of *want* and *indigence.*

3. For *the satisfaction of their Flesh*, in sins of *temper* and *complexion, age*, or *way of life.*

1. The *first* pretence whereby men justifie to their own thoughts the indulged transgression of *several* Laws, whilst they obey in *others*; is because *those transgressions*, wherein they allow themselves, are *necessary for the preservation of their Religion*, and *of themselves in those times of danger* and *persecution, wherein Gods Providence has placed them.*

Religion is in *danger*, and like to be *undermined* by the *close* and *subtle arts*, or *overborn* by the more *open* and powerful violence, of strong and witty Enemies. And this is *Gods Cause*, and *Christ* our Lord and Saviours *interest*; so that whatever is done here, we think is in service of our Maker. If we *fight*, it is his *battles*; if we *spitefully persecute* and devour, it is *his enemies*; if we *rob* and *spoil*, it is to weaken *his adversaries*; if we *lye* and *dissemble*, it is to defeat the designs of

of such as he will call *Rebels*; if we transgress in *all* the instances, and use *all* the *lawless liberties* of *war*, it is because we are engaged in his *quarrel*. The Cause which we contend for, and have to manage, is *sacred*; and that we believe will justifie *all* means, and hallow any services *whatsoever*. So that our *heat* and *fierceness*, *wrath* and *bitterness*, *envy* and *malice*, *revenge* and *cruelty*, *endless strife* and *ungovernable variance*, *spoils* and *robberies*, *seditions* and *murthers*, *wars* and *tumults*: in a word, all the transports of *passion* and *peevishness*, *anger* and *ill nature*, *rigour* and *revenge*, are all *sacred* under this Cover; and pass for *holy zeal*, and *pious vehemence*, and *religious concern* for *God*; whenas in reality, they are a most *impious throwing* off, and *bursting* through all the *Tyes* of *Religion*, and Bonds of *Duty towards men*.

All these enormous effects, and horrible instances of an indulged disobedience, are at this Day the consequents of this pretension.

For some, on one hand, who call us *Hereticks*, and *enemies* to *Christ* and *holy Church*, think no means *sinful* whereby they can *weaken* and *divide*, *seduce*, *surprize*, or any way *destroy* us. For they esteem it *lawful* to *dissemble* under all shapes to *gain* a *Proselyte*, or to *disaffect* a *Party* to our *Communion* and *Government* They *act* a *part* and play the *Hypocrite* in all Disguises, and under cover of all Trades, the better to insinuate themselves among all sorts of men; they will *affirm falshood*, even of their *own* Church, when it serves their turn; and *deny* any *Doctrines*, *Precepts*, or *Parts* of it, when they are a *scandal* to the persons whom they would practise upon, and make against them. They make no conscience of *lies* and *perjuries* in conversation, when thereby they can promote the Churches interest. For they have found out ways to *deceive* without *lying*, and

to

to *lye* without *sin*, and to *forswear* without *perjury*, and to *perjure* themselves without *danger*; by their *pious frauds*, and *religious arts*, of *equivocations*, *mental reservations*, *dispensations*, *pardons* and *indulgences*. They can be *treacherous* and *faithless* without *breach of faith*, if it were made to *Hereticks*; they *assassinate* and *murther Magistrates*, *embitter* and *embroil Subjects* against their *Governours*, and against *one another*; they *conspire* the *death of Kings*, the *confusion* and *fall of Kingdoms*, the *ruine* of all that dare *oppose* them, yea, even of all that *differ* from them. And all this they do for *Christ's* sake, in a *zealous concern for God and Religion*, and for the utter extirpation of all *heresie* and *schism*. It is *this* pretence which bears them out through all, and makes them believe that they are *serving God*, whilst after this extravagant rate they are overturning his whole Gospel.

And *others* again even of our *own selves*, who justly abhor these damnable instances of disobedience, upon the pretence of preserving or propagating Religion, in *some furious* and *fiery spirited* sort of *Papists*, (for God forbid that we should think them *all* to be of this temper) do yet run into the same extravagance, which upon so great reason they condemn in them.

For if we look into our *zeal* for the *common Religion* of *Protestants*, we shall find that we transgress *many*, and those most *material* and *weighty* Laws of it, whilst we express our *affection* and *concern* to *defend* and *preserve* it.

For doth not this *pretence of preserving our Religion* carry us beyond all the bounds of *peaceableness*, and *good subjection*? Our great fears about its defence make us daily to *distrust our Governours*; to *think*, and *speak irreverently*, and *reproachfully* of their *persons*; to *undervalue* all their *counsels*, to *misconstrue* all their *actions*, and proceedings,

proceedings; and with ſuch *undutifull credulity*, and *unchriſtian raſhneſs*, to *believe*, and *ſpread* abroad concerning them moſt *odious ſuſpicions*, and *invidious reports*; they make us *pragmatical* and *buſie-bodies*, to go out of our *own ſphere*, and to *uſurp* upon the *Magiſtrates*, in *projecting means* and expediencies, *prejudging Criminals*, and *irreverent cenſuring*, *reproaching*, yea, and oft-times *ſlandering of our Governours*, if they, either in *Court* or *Council*, at the *Board* or on the *Bench*, determine contrary to our anticipations. They make us to *diſturb* the *quiet*, and to *unſettle* the *peace* of our *fellow-ſubjects*, in filling their minds with *endleſs jealouſies* about their *Princes care*, and their *own ſafety*, and in poſſeſſing them with *diſcontents*, and *undutifull ſuſpicions*, *words*, and *actions*, to the great *weakning of Government*, and *diſturbance of the publick peace*.

Yea, I add further, theſe ſame fears for our endangered Religion tranſport us into the tranſgreſſion of ſundry weighty Laws, which oblige us towards our very *enemies*, who have contrived to deſtroy us. For they have made us moſt partially *backward to believe any thing that is good*, and *forward* to *catch at every thing that is ſpoken ill againſt them*. They have made many of us *fierce* and *implacable*, *malicious* and *revengefull*; they have cauſed us to *thirſt* after their *blood*, and to be in *pain* when they *eſcape*; to meaſure our *Religion* and the *ſoundneſs of our piety*, by a *reproachfull*, *ſpitefull*, and *implacable uſage* and *behaviour* towards them. *All* which are *tempers* and *practices* moſt contrary to thoſe Laws of *forgiving injuries*, of *loving enemies*, of *praying for our perſecutors*, of *returning good to all that have evilly entreated us*, of *meekneſs* and *patience*, *mercy* and *placableneſs* towards the *worſt* of *men*, yea, even the *worſt* of *enemies*, which are ſo much the ſoul and ſpirit of that Religion, which we pretend to be ſo zealouſly concerned for. And

And if we look into our *Zeal* for our *several parties*, how many other Laws shall we find to be daily transgressed, I will not say for the *preservation*, but even, where that is sufficiently secured, for the higher *advancement* and *encrease*, of them? For what *rude* and *unmannerly*, *envious* and *ill natured reflections*, are daily cast upon *those persons*, especially *Ministers*, and men of *Note* and *Eminence*, who *differ* from us? How forward are many among us to *undervalue* and *disparage*, to *contemn* and *affront* them; to heap *reproach* and *infamy* upon them, thereby to render their *persons ridiculous*, and their *pains useless*? For are not several of us perpetually *censuring* and *speaking evil* of them, *undervaluing* all their *real virtues*, *putting hard* and *uncandid interpretations* upon *all* their *actions*, *prying diligently* and *maliciously* into all their *defects*, and *aggravating* all their *faults* or *follies*, *raising* continually, and *spreading* to their disparagement *uncharitable* and *envious*, yea, oft-times *false* and *slanderous reports*? We *envy* and *hate*, *reproach* and *censure*, *revile* and *slander*, *bite* and *devour* one another; and all this *fierceness* and *uncharitableness* we use, for that *meek*, that *charitable*, *gentle*, *quiet* thing, *Religion*. For in *its* service we take our selves to be engaged, and so long we fancy that we have a *liberty* of *saying* or *doing* any thing.

Thus full of *Sin* and *Disobedience* is this *sanctified pretence*. It is the cover for every offence, and the common shelter for all transgressions; for we boggle not at any *Sin*, so long as it tends to *preserve us* in the *prosperous profession* of our *endangered*, or *oppressed Religion*.

But if men would consider calmly, and have patience to look beyond the surface and bare outsides of things, they would soon discern the vanity of this pretence, and how far it will be from excusing any such sinfull

and disobedient practices, as they seek to justifie and warrant by it.

For as for *true* and *substantial Religion*, for protection whereof they would be thought to venture upon all these transgressions, it stands in no *need* of their help to *preserve it in persecuting times*, although they should use *innocent* and *just means*, not such as are *sinfull* and *disobedient*. It would live then without their care, and whether they went about by any *politick* means to preserve it, or *no*. For *Religion* is not *lost*, when *Religious men* are *persecuted*; it doth not *suffer*, when they do that profess it, seeing it is not one *jot* impaired when men are *buffetted* and *imprison'd*, nay, *bleed* and *dye* for it.

Indeed as for the *freedom* of the *outward means* of Religion, (*viz.*) the *publickness of preaching*, the *community of prayers*, the *unrestrained use of Sacraments*, and the like; they are much *straitned* by *persecutions*, and we must expect to feel either a *great want*, or at least a *great difficulty* in them when *Times* are *troublesome*. A persecuting Government can in great measure deprive us of them, when after our utmost use of all such means as are no wayes *undutifull* or against any law of Christ, we are not able longer to preserve them.

But as for the *substantial part* and *main body* of Religion it self, which consists in *sound faith*, and *upright obedience*, and which those *outward means* are *appointed to beget* in us; no state of Times need make them wanting. For they are within our selves, and depend altogether upon *Gods Grace* and our own *Free Wills*; so that all the Powers of *Earth* and *Hell* are never able to rob us of them. Could the *violence* of *persecution* have *oppressed* our *Religion*, it had been *stifled* in the *birth*. For it entred in a persecuting age, and yet it was not *overborn* by the pressure of its sufferings, but bravely

overcame

overcame them. It *begun, grew* up, and *conquer'd* all the world in the very *heat* of *affliction* and *opposition*; the more it was burdened, the more still it spread; and the more men sought to straiten it, the further was it enlarged; the common observation then being this, that *the* c *unparallel'd sufferings of its professors, were the true prolifick cause of the vast increase of the Church.*

c *Nec quicquam tamen proficit exquisitior quæque crudelitas vestra, illecebra est magis Sectæ. Plures efficimur quotiès metimur à vobis, semen est sanguis Christianorum.* Tertul. Apol. c. 50.

And indeed what should hinder Religion from thriving in *evil times?* For the same Religious Duties, which are practised with more *ease* in a prosperous, are exercised also, but with greater *honour*, in an afflicted state of things. To *believe*, and *do well*; to be *pious* and *pure*, *chaste* and *sober*, *just* and *charitable*, *meek* and *gentle*, *quiet* and *peaceable*, with all other instances of a substantial and acceptable Religion, are indifferent and undetermined to any turns of Providence. They may be shewn under *fines* and *imprisonments*, *axes* and *halters*; as *well*, and much *more honourably*, than in times of *ease* and *softness*.

Nay, some of its most *eminent parts* and *noble instances*, are not capable of being exercised at other times. For the duties of *patience*, and *taking up the cross*, of *forgiving injuries*, and *doing good to enemies*, of *praying for them that persecute us, and despitefully use us*, which are the most *exalted strains*, and glorious heights of our Religion, are such, for which a *peaceable* and *prosperous*, a *favourable* and *flourishing* age affords no famous opportunities. For we must be in a state of *suffering evil*, and labouring under a load of persecution, before we can sufficiently evidence how *readily*, how *magnanimously*, how *meekly*, how *charitably*, and *Christian*-like we can undergo it.

So that as for *Religion* and *Sufferings*, they are at no ſuch diſtance, but that they may very eaſily be made to meet; they bear no ſuch mutual oppoſition, but that they may very well *conſiſt* together; nay, I add farther, but that they may *honour* and *ennoble*, and in many inſtances, *enlarge* and *improve* each other. And therefore Religion needs not to be preſerved from ſufferings, ſince it cannot only live in them, but is alſo much extended, heightned, and advanced by them.

But where Religion wants our help, and calls for our aſſiſtance; yet is it not poſſible for us to pleaſe *God*, or to ſecure *it* by *ſinfull* means, but only by ſuch as are either *virtuous*, or at leaſt *innocent*.

It is not poſſible for us, I ſay, to *pleaſe God* by *ſinfull means*, although we intend them for his own ſervice. For what is there in God that ſhould be ſerved by our ſins? Is his *Love* for any thing greater than his *hatred* is for ſin, ſo as the gratefulneſs of *that*, ſhould make *this*, otherwiſe moſt *offenſive*, an *acceptable ſervice*? Is any thing that we can offer to him ſo pleaſing, as our obedience? Is he more delighted when we follow our *own* counſel, than when we follow *his*; when we do our *own*, than when we do *his* pleaſure? For all *thoſe* Laws of the Goſpel, and inſtances of obedience, which under this pretenſion we tranſgreſs, are wayes of *Gods own appointment*; they are a ſervice of his own chooſing, a Religion that is moſt agreeable to his mind, and fitted in all things according to his liking; a rule that he has thought moſt abſolute to direct our actions, and moſt fit for us to walk by. If then we would expreſs *our concern* for *God*, our *venerable eſteem* of his *wiſdom*, our *acquieſcence* in his *choice*, our *ſubmiſſion* to his *ordering*, our *acknowledgement* of his *authority*, and our *chearfull compliance* with his *pleaſure*; let us do it by a religious obſervance of *theſe* Rules, which are of his

his *own* preſcribing. Let us honour him in his own way, by *doing our duty*, and practiſing *ſuch* things as he has made expreſſions of honour, by making them inſtances of obedience. For *diſobedience* can ſerve no *intereſt of God*, nothing that we can do being ſo effectuall a reproach to *all* his *Attributes*, as to *diſobey* him.

Nor is the uſe of evil and *unlawfull means*, in any wiſe a fitter expreſſion of our *care for Religion*. For what is there in Religion, that can be honoured and advanced by diſobedience? Is there any thing in *it* ſo *ſacred* as the *Divine Laws*; and dare any man call that his *care* of them, when he *lays waſt*, and plainly *rejects* them? It is groſs impudence for any man to pretend *Piety*, in the *breach of Duty*; and to cry up *Religion*, whilſt he is acting *irreligiouſly*; he prides himſelf in the *empty name*, when it is clear to all that he has loſt the *thing*; for as for *Piety* it ſelf, and *true Religion*, by tranſgreſſing and trampling upon the Divine Laws, he doth not *further* and *defend*, but *impiouſly* and *irreligiouſly deſtroys* it.

It is not *Religion* then, whatever men may vainly pretend, that makes them run into the *breach of Laws*, and contempt of Duty, leſt they ſhould *ſuffer* in the *profeſſion* of it. For God and Religion owe them no thanks for ſuch a courſe, becauſe *he* is not *honoured*, nor *it ſtrengthned* and *preſerved*, but *ruined* and *deſtroyed* by it.

But the *true* and *real cauſe* of *ſuch diſobedience*, whereof *God* and *Religion* are only the *colour* and *falſe pretence*, is plainly a *great want* of *Religion*, and of the *love of God*, and too *great* a *love of the world*, and of *mens own ſelves*. Men are hurried away by an *unmortified* love of *pleaſures*, *honours*, and *temporal intereſts*; and they have not *Religion* enough to *reſtrain* and *overrule* them. For *theſe* it is, and not *Religion*, which *ſuf-*

ferings

ferings and *perſecuting times* take from them: and an *ungovernable deſire* to preſerve *theſe*, which makes them ſo *violent*, as that, at *ſuch* times, no *Laws of Religion* can *hold* them. When men *ſet at nought* and *diſparage Governours*, *diſobey Laws diſturb* the *Publick Peace*, *injure* their *Fellow-ſubjects*, and commit ſeveral other *ſinful* acts and *irreligious* violations of the *Laws of Chriſt*, that they may *keep off Perſecution* for the *profeſſion* of the *Chriſtian Faith*: they ſhew plainly that they will follow *Chriſt* only in a *thriving*, but not in a *ſuffering Religion*. They will ſerve him no longer than he ſets them *uppermoſt*, and above their Brethren. For rather than *ſuffer* any *loſs*, and fall into any *dangers* for their *adherence* to him; they will *leave* him and his Laws to ſend for themſelves, and flatly diſobey him. But when they do ſo, it is *ſhameleſs hypocriſie* to pretend, that all their *tranſgreſſions* and *diſobedience* is ſtill upon the *Principle*, and from the *Power* of *Religion*; ſince it is not *Religion*, but a *reſolution* to be *uppermoſt*; not *duty*, but *ambition*, *covetouſneſs*, *ſenſuality*, *revenge*, or a *neſt* of ſome *other unmortified* and *reigning vices* of *like* nature, which makes them under *pretence* of a *conſcientious care* for *religious profeſſion*, to *deſtroy all religious practice*.

This, one would think, is *plain* and *evident* to any man, who can have the patience to conſider it; that *True Religion can never be the cauſe of ſin*, or *make men irreligious and diſobedient*. *That* muſt not for *ſhame* be called mens *Religion*, but their *Luſt* which makes them *wicked*, and carries them on to *tranſgreſs* Gods *Laws*, that are the *chief* and *ſovereign* part of his Religion, which, who ſo *keeps*, is a *religious*, as whoſoever *breaks* them, is an *ungodly* and *irreligious* man.

This indeed is clear Doctrine, and obvious to any *common*, if it be withal a *free* and *conſiderate* underſtanding. And it were ſcarce poſſible that any men ſhould

ſhould think otherwiſe, had they not either by *accident*, *haſte* or *ill deſign*, taken up an odd *notion* of Religion, altogether *different* from that which the *Scriptures* give, and which all *conſiderately* religious men have of it.

For by *Religion* they mean only their *adherence* to the *Doctrines* and *Opinions*, but not to the *Laws* and *Precepts* of the *Goſpel*. And when they talk of *defending* and maintaining of *Religion*; they intend not a defence of *Laws*, but of *Notions*; not a maintenance of the *practice* of *Chriſtian Precepts*, but only of the *profeſſion* of *Chriſtian Doctrines*. They are of the Religion which Chriſt *reveals*, but not of that which he *commands*; they will *know* and *believe* what *he* pleaſes, but *do* what *they* pleaſe themſelves. They are only for a Religion of *Orthodox Tenets*, but not of *Upright Practice*; and if *thereby* they can preſerve men *ſafe* in *thinking*, and *profeſſing well*; they fancy that God will not be offended with their uſe of any *means*, though never ſo *wicked* and *diſobedient*.

But this is a moſt *groſs miſtake*, and a moſt *dangerous Notion* of *Religion*, which is quite another thing than what this conceit doth repreſent it to be. For,

Firſt, The *prime part* and matter of *Religion* is the *practick part*, (viz.) the *Laws* and *Precepts*, the *Promiſes* and *Threatnings* of the *Goſpel*. And agreeably thereto, the * *prime buſineſs* of all *Religious* men is an *obedient practice*, and performance of them, or a *virtuous diſcharge of duty* and a *holy life*. This is that Religion whereby all of us muſt ſtand or fall, and that great *condition*, which, as I have ſhewn, we muſt for ever *live* or *dye* by. *When Chriſt comes to judgement*, ſayes S. *Paul*, *he will render to every man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. And in that proſpect of the laſt judgement, which S. *John* tells us God vouchſafed him, *men*

* *Noſtro autem populo quid horum poteſt objici, cujus omnis Religio eſt ſine ſcelere, & ſine macula vivere?* Lact. de juſt. l. 5. c. 9.

were

were judged every one according to their works, Rev. 20. 13. This Religion of *Obedience* and a *good Life*, is that which the *Gospel* is full of; wherein every *Chapter*, nay, almost every *verse* of it *instructs* us, and some way or other *directs*, *exhorts*, *encourages* and *excites* to. And therefore, as ever we would pass for Religious men in the *Scripture Notion*, we must be careful to live in all *Piety towards God*, by *complying* readily with all *his Laws*, *depending* upon his *Providence*, and *resigning* our selves up to his *pleasure*; in all *purity* and *soberness*, being free from all *lust* and *intemperance*, all *sinful pleasures*, and *covetous practices*; in all *justice* and *charitableness*, *doing right*, and *keeping peace*, and *shewing mercy* and *kindness* towards all men. This, saies S. *James*, will pass for *pure and undefiled Religion before God and the Father* at the last day, if in such instances as these we have expressed, not our Opinions, but our Obedience; by *visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction*, *and by keeping our selves unspotted from* all filthiness and disobedience of the *world*. But *if any man* pretends to be religious, who is destitute of this obedience, *that mans religion is vain*, Jam. 1. 26, 27.

Secondly, Another great *part* and *object* of Religion, is the *Doctrines* of the *Gospel*. And agreeably another act or instance of *Religious Service*, is *Faith*, or *Orthodox Belief*. And this is intended by God himself as a *means* to produce the former; Faith being the great *instrument* in working out our obedience. For *this is that victory*, saies S. *John*, which makes us conquerors, and *overcometh the world*, *even our Faith*, 1 John 5. 4. An *obedient practice*, is all that a *righteous faith* aims at; it is its *end* and *perfection*, that which consummates and compleats it. It being, as S. *James* assures us, *by works* which *faith* d *co-operates* and concurs to, that *faith is made perfect*, Jam. 2. 22. And this all the points of our

d Πίστις συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις.

Christian

Chriſtian Faith are moſt admirably fitted to effect it in us. For in that *epitome* and compendious account of them, whereinto they were contracted by the *Apoſtles*, & which is uſually called the *Apoſtles Creed*, there is not any *one* purely *ſpeculative* Article, or point of *idle* notion, and *meer belief*. But every one is influential upon our *practice*, and helps on our obedience; as any man, of competent skill and abilities, may diſcern by running over the particulars.

Theſe *two* then, (*viz.*) *Knowledge* and *Practice*, or *Faith* and *Obedience*, take in the compaſs, and integrate the nature of our *Religion*. Obedience is the *chief* thing, and *firſt* in Gods deſign; and Faith or Knowledge is the great *means* which God has preſcribed us, whereby to compaſs and effect it. So that *Religion* in that ſenſe wherein the *Scriptures* uſe, and God at the laſt day will *reward* it; is the ſame, as *obedience to the Goſpel proceeding from a belief of it*, or, in S. *Paul*'s phraſe, an *Obedient Faith*, or a *Faith which worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

And now let any man, who conſiders this, bethink himſelf, and tell me whether the *tranſgreſſion of Gods Laws* can ever be called *Religion* in the *Scripture-ſenſe*; or whether it be poſſible for men to evidence themſelves to be *Religious*, by their *diſobedience*. For the making us obedient to Gods *Laws* is the great deſign, and *ruling* part of all true and acceptable Religion; and the belief and profeſſion of Gods *Truth* is an exerciſe and inſtance of it, that avails us only ſo far, as it concurs to, and effects this Religion of Obedience. So that Religion is not *preſerved*, but *loſt* by breach of Duty; it is never *ſtrengthned* by *diſobedient* and *ſinful* means, but is alwayes waſted and deſtroyed by them.

Let no man therefore ever dare to make Religion a cover for unlawful Luſts; or dream of protecting it

from ſufferings and perſecutions this way. For God will by no means endure ſuch groſs mockery and hypocritical pretenſions, as for men to *feign* piety in the breach of Duty; but if they wickedly tranſgreſs his Laws, and continue impenitently to diſobey him, let their Forms and Profeſſions of Religion be what they will, he will take ſevere and endleſs vengeance on them, for their *impious* and *irreligious diſobedience*. If they are *ſcandalized* at the *Croſs*, that is, if they fall off from *religious* and *obedient walking* into *irreligious tranſgreſſions*, to prevent thoſe *croſſes* that in perſecuting times are annexed to a *religious practice* and *profeſſion*; they are *ſcandalized*, or e *offended* in him. The Croſs is to them a f *ſtumbling-block*, and a *rock of offence*, it makes them trip, and turn out of their duty; becauſe they will diſown their Lord, and break all his Laws, rather than undergo it. And this is a moſt provoking ſin, and ſubjects men to a moſt dreadful puniſhment. For as God will abundantly recompence any loſſes which befall us through the exerciſe of an *obedient* Religion, and a pious conſcience; ſo will he alſo inflict ſuch torments, as infinitely ſurpaſs all thoſe light and preſent advantages, which we may at any time promiſe our ſelves from our *politick diſobedience*. *For whoſoever*, by ſinfull means, *will ſeek*, in *perillous* and *perſecuting* times, ſuch as thoſe were, *to ſave his life* in this world; *he ſhall* certainly *loſe it* for ever in the next world: *but whoſoever ſhall lay down his life* for Chriſts *ſake* (in taking up that croſs which is laid upon a Chriſtian profeſſion, and a Chriſtian practice) *that ſame* man *ſhall ſave* and encreaſe *it* eternally, *Luke* 9. 23, 24. So that no dangers in obedience, can ever render it ſecure for any man to diſobey. But that which God indiſpenſably exacts of us in perillous caſes is this. *Fear not them which kill the body, but*, after that is done, have nothing more

e Mat. 11. 6.

f 1 Pet. 2. 8. Galat. 5. 11.

more to fright you with, being utterly *unable to kill*, or ſo much as touch *the ſoul*; *but fear him who* exacts obedience of you even at ſuch times as your bodies are like to periſh for it, for he, after he hath killed the body, which is all that they can do, *is able* eternally *to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell*, Mat. 10. 28.

No dangers then can make obedience ceaſe to be our *Duty*, nor any ſufferings make it ceaſe to be our *Intereſt*: So that neither *Religion*, nor *Prudence* will ever allow of ſinful means; but every *Religious*, yea, every *wiſe* man muſt take up the Croſs, and patiently bear any ſufferings that come upon him for Religion, rather than uſe any breach of duty, or unlawful wayes, either to prevent, or remove it.

And this the *Saints* of God and *Religious* men alwayes did. For no dangers or hazards, no pains or ſufferings in obedience, could ever draw them to ſeek for ſhelter by diſobeying. *David* was tryed with hazards and perſecutions of all ſorts, but neither *ſenſe* of *preſent*, nor fears of *future* evils, could ever chaſe him from his duty, or make him ſeek relief from iniquity and ſin. He could not be forced upon it by the moſt apparent dangers, even of the moſt affecting loſs, the loſs of *life* it ſelf. *The wicked*, ſaith he, *have laid a ſnare for me, yet I erred not from thy Precepts. My ſoul is continually in my hand*, ready to be ſnatched out of it, *yet do I not forget thy Law*, Pſal. 119. 109, 110. He was not grieved, or frighted into it, either by the preſſure of his pains, or by the number of his perſecutors: *They had almoſt conſumed me upon earth, but I forſook not thy Commandments*, ver. 87. *and many* now ſtill *are my perſecutors* and enemies, *yet do I not decline from thy teſtimonies*, ver. 157.

The *Holy Apoſtles* of our Saviour conflicted with more difficulties and diſtreſs, perſecutions, and ſuffer-

ings for the Religion and Obedience of their Lord, than any men, I think, ever did, or it may be ever will do. *I think*, ſayes S. *Paul*, *that God hath ſet forth us Apoſtles laſt, as it were men appointed to* the bloodieſt, which is uſually the laſt, ſcene of all, even to *death* it ſelf. *For we are* expoſed to ſlaughter, as men were, in the tragical ſports of that time, upon a publick theatre, being *made a ſpectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.* From the firſt entrance on our office *even to this preſent hour, we both hunger, and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no certain dwelling place,* being *made as the* very *filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all things*, from the firſt, *to this day*, 1 Cor. 4. 9, 11, 13. If any ſtraits could authorize an evil action, or if any preſſures could juſtifie a diſobedient eſcape, ſure theſe would. But they knew too well the nature of their Religion, ever to dream of a liberty to ſin that they might avoid perſecution; and they were too reſolutely addicted to it, ever to attempt it. For neither the *extremity* of their *ſufferings*, nor the *deſperateneſs* of their *danger*, could ever make them tranſgreſs their duty, or go beyond the Laws of their Religion, to leſſen or prevent them. But they obeyed *bravely* and *entirely*, even in the *higheſt ſtrains*, even in the moſt *ungrateful inſtances*, even in *thoſe* matters, wherein, if any where, the *malice* and *violence* of their enemies would *provoke*, or rather *force* them to diſobey. For in the midſt of all theſe preſſures, ſayes S. *Paul*, *being reviled, we bleſs, being perſecuted, we ſuffer it; being defamed, we do* nothing worſe than *entreat* and pray for our defamers, 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. *In patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in* popular *tumults, in* manual *labours, in all* theſe *things*, and in the throng and diſtraction of all our ſorrows, *we approve our ſelves as the* true obedient Servants, and faithful *Miniſters*

Miniſters of God; ſhewing that, not by any ſelfiſh, diſobedient, politick ſhifts, but by *pureneſs* of converſation, *by long-ſuffering, by kindneſs*, even to our very enemies; in a word, *by* the moſt excellent of all gifts, and the Epitome of all Duty, Charity or *love unfeigned*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 3, 4, 5.

Religion then can never give *protection* to any *diſobedience*, nor our *concern* and *zeal* for God, be pleaded with any ſhew of *modeſty* or *reaſon* in vindication of our *tranſgreſſions* of any of his *Laws* or *Precepts*. For *Religion needs no defence* from *times of ſuffering*, it can *live* in them, it is *improved* by them, nay, ſome of its moſt *glorious* parts & *eminent* inſtances are *never* ſhewn in any *luſtre*, but when we fall *under* them. And where it *ought* to be defended, the *breach of Laws* is in no wiſe a *fit inſtrument* for its *advancement* and *protection*. For *God* cannot be *honoured*, nor *Religion advanced* by diſobedience. *Obedience* is ſo *eſſential* and *ſupereminent* a part of its Nature, and ſo preferable to any *idle profeſſion* or *ineffective belief*; that to tranſgreſs *Chriſtian Laws*, for the maintenance of an *undiſturbed liberty* in *profeſſing Chriſtian opinions*, were not to *ſtrengthen* and *preſerve*, but *dangerouſly to wound*, if not *wholly* to *deſtroy* it. This diſobedience to *Chriſtian Laws* that we may avoid ſuffering for the *profeſſion* of *Chriſtian Doctrines*, is ſuch as the very *temper* of the *Goſpel*, which is made up in great part of *paſſive Precepts* and a *ſuffering Religion*, plainly *contradicts*; ſuch as its *Laws* and *Precepts* ſtrictly *forbid*; ſuch as *Chriſt* our Lord and Judge will *certainly*, and moſt *ſeverely puniſh*; and ſuch as the moſt *perſecuted religious men*, could never be *provoked* or *forced* into, either by the *greatneſs of their fears*, or by the *violence* of their *pains*, although the moſt exquiſite that could be invented by the moſt *ſearching wits*, and *keeneſt malice* in the world.

So

So that whenſoever men *ſin* to avoid *ſuffering*, and diſobey the *Laws* of Religion to preſerve the *profeſſion* of it from *perſecution*; it is not *Religion*, but their *Luſts*, not their *love of God*, but their *love of their own ſelves* which makes them *diſobedient*. *Religion* will upon no accounts juſtifie their tranſgreſſions, but utterly condemns them: and unleſs their repentance prevents it, God at the laſt Day will *endleſly puniſh*, and avenge for them.

But as for *Religion* in that *narrow ſenſe* wherein ſome underſtand it, *i. e. the uſe of religious Ordinances, and the profeſſion and belief of religious Opinions*; if men would ſhew their *care* and *concern* to preſerve the free liberty and unperſecuted uſe of that, ſo as both *God* and all *good men* ſhould honour and *commend* them; let them ſhew it in a *pious* and *diſcreet* management. Which they will juſtly be thought to do, if they *keep within their own ſphere*, and *uſe* even there *no ſinful and diſobedient means*, and *are zealous in the firſt place for the practice and preſervation of religious Laws, and next to that for religious Ordinances and Opinions.*

1. In ſhewing their care to preſerve the *free liberty* and *unperſecuted uſe* of *religious Ordinances* and *Profeſſions*, they muſt *act within their own ſphere*. We *private* Chriſtians muſt not preſcribe methods of preſerving it to *publick* Magiſtrates, or *cenſure* their *proceedings*, and *ſpeak irreverently* of their *perſons* and *adminiſtrations*, when they determine otherwiſe than we had thought *fitting*. We muſt not, without *conſent* and *approbation* of *Authority*, *combine* in Bodies, and *aſſociate* in *ſolemn Leagues*, *Bonds*, and *Covenants*, to be aiding and aſſiſting to each other with our *Perſons*, *Arms*, and *Purſes*, to *protect* it againſt all Oppoſers. For theſe are ſuch things as are no part of *our* buſineſs; but God has hedged them in, and entruſted them in *other hands*.

He

He has delegated that power to *Kings* and *Governours*, to take care of the *common good*, and to judge of *publick expedience*. He has put the *ſword* into the *Magiſtrates* hands, and has authorized him, and him *only*, to have power of life and death, and to decree and eſtabliſh *peace* and *war*. And if any man, without his order, ſhall take the Sword, and uſe it againſt his Brother; he may read his Sentence, which is writ in plain words already, *They that take the ſword*, as every man doth when Authority doth not allow, or reach it out to him, *ſhall periſh by the ſword*, Matth. 26. 52.

Theſe means then, and any others which God has appropriated to the care, and entruſted in the hands of other men, can be no *lawful* expreſſions of our care, but an *unlawful* intruding into anothers Office; a *ſinful* uſe of what is put out of *ours*, and committed to an *others* management. Our exerciſe and uſe of them is a *proud uſurpation*, an *unpeaceable encroachment*, a *buſie medling* in other mens *Offices* and *Affairs*, againſt the plain Precept of *ſtudying to be quiet*, and to *do our own buſineſs*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 11.

But the endeavours which we are to uſe, and the means whereby we muſt try to ſecure to our ſelves an unperſecuted freedom in religious Ordinances and Profeſſions; muſt be ſuch as are within the ſphere of *private* men. We muſt be *upright* and *exemplary* in the practice of it *our ſelves*, and preſs a like exemplarineſs in the practice of it upon *others*. By our *humble*, *modeſt*, *peaceable* and *ſubmiſſive* carriage, we muſt convince ſuch as are in Power that it *deſerves* protection; and by our *affectionate*, *fervent*, and *importunate* g *prayers* to God, we muſt endeavour to have it put into *their hearts* to protect and preſerve it. We muſt *plead* its Cauſe, and repreſent that *truth* and *goodneſs* which may recommend it; and try to *wipe* off the *aſperſions*, and

g ἐπεσχέθη τῇ τῶν θεῶν φιλανθρωπίᾳ, καὶ τοῖς χρισιανῶν διώγμοις, τοῦτο μὲν ἐκ νέου καὶ τῶν διὰ παντὸς φάρμακον, ſayes *Nazianzen* of the putting by *Julian's* deſigns againſt the Chriſtians. *Orat.* 3. *adv. Julian.*

and *rectifie* the *miſtakes* of ſuch as plead *againſt* it, or think *hardly* of it. Theſe, and ſuch like means, are the laudable ſervice in this Caſe, and the proper buſineſs of *private* Chriſtians. And whilſt their care is contained within this compaſs, and they act thus within their own *ſphere*, it is *excellent* and *praiſe-worthy*; they ſeek to preſerve *Religion*, and their ſeeking to do it in this way, is it ſelf very *pious* and *religious*.

2. In ſhewing their care to preſerve the *free* and *unperſecuted profeſſion* of Religion, they muſt exerciſe ſuch only of thoſe actions within their own ſphere, as are *lawful* and *innocent*, but by no means endeavour to maintain it by ſuch as are *ſinful* and *diſobedient*. They muſt not defend it by *lyes* and *forgeries*, by *wrath* and *bitterneſs*, by *fierceneſs* and *revenge*, by *ſlandering* and *reviling* of their *Oppoſers*. They muſt *ſo* defend Religion, as not to *diſobey* it; becauſe that is not *defending*, but *betraying* it. A *free profeſſion* is no further deſirable than it tends to an *upright practice*. So that to diſobey for it, is to loſe all that wherefore we endeavour after it. *Truth* muſt never be bought with the loſs of *innocence*; nor muſt we ever commit any one *ſinful action*, to promote a freedom of *orthodox* and *true profeſſions*.

3. In evidencing their care in preſerving the free and unperſecuted profeſſion of Religion, they muſt be *zealons* in the *firſt* place for the *practice* and *preſervation* of *religious Laws*, and next to that for *religious Ordinances* and *Opinions*. S. *Paul* directs us to the *great* Object of all *religious zeal*, when he tells us, that *Chriſt came into the world to purchaſe to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good* WORKS, Tit. 2. 14. Nothing in the world is ſo *warrantable* a matter of a mans *zeal*, as *Gods Laws*, and *mens obedience*. For the *Laws* of Chriſt's Goſpel are that part which he *eſteems* moſt; he has

has made them the meaſure of *life* or *death*, the Rule of our eternal *abſolution* or *condemnation*. And as he accounts of them, ſo ſhould we too. Our *zeal* for them muſt be *more warm*, and our *care* more *watchful*, than for any other thing, becauſe *God* himſelf is moſt eſpecially concerned *for* them, and all *men* are moſt highly concerned *in* them; they being that, whereby all men muſt live or dye eternally. *This I will*, ſayes S. *Paul* to *Titus*, *that thou affirm conſtantly, That they which have believed in God may be CAREFUL to maintain GOOD WORKS; theſe things are good, and profitable unto men*, Tit. 3. 8. So that the *practice* of *religious Laws* muſt be the great point, wherein we are to be *zealous* and *careful* in the *firſt* place.

Next to which we muſt take care of thoſe *opinions*, which have a great *influence* upon, and are the great *productive inſtruments* of all *obedient practice*; ſuch as are all opinions, which are either *motives* or *inducements*, *helps* or *encouragements* to *obedience*. In which ſort of opinions our Religion abounds, there being, as I ſaid, no *idle Article* in the Chriſtian Creed, but ſuch *Doctrines* and *Declarations* concerning *God*, and *Chriſt*, and *our ſelves*, and the *other world*, as are either *abſolutely neceſſary*, or *very helpful* to a *holy life*. All which, according to their ſeveral proportions in promoting piety and obedience to Gods Laws, we are to be *zealouſly* concerned for in the *next* place, as we are for that pious obedience, which is wrought by them, in the *firſt*.

But when we have ſhewn our *good affection* to *ſubſtantial piety* and *Religion* by a *juſt zeal* for *obedience*, and plainly *practical opinions*; then may it be very fit for us to ſhew our *zeal* for *other true Doctrines* and *Profeſſions* likewiſe. For it is a great honour to *God*, and an ornament to *Religion*, that we have it *pure* and *ſincere*, free from all things that are liable to juſt excepti-

on, and from all mixture of *errour* and *falſhood*. And it is alſo a great happineſs to *men* to have *orthodox apprehenſions* in Religion, and to embrace nothing for *Goſpel* truths, but what God has thereby declared to them. But it is a further happineſs ſtill, and ſuch whereof men are the moſt ſenſible, to be free from the *imperious impoſition* and *tyranny* of *errour*; ſo as neither to be forced upon the *impoſſible belief* of that, which in our own minds we ſee is *falſe*, and therefore cannot believe; nor upon the *feigned* and *hypocritical profeſſion* of believing a thing, when *really* we do *not* believe it; *one* of which *two* is mens unhappineſs, when their *profeſſed Religion* falls under *perſecution*. Now both theſe are *ſevere* and *rigorous* impoſitions. For the *firſt* is utterly *impoſſible* to *any*, ſo long as it continues a *free* and *impartial*, *head*; as the *latter* is to *any*, whilſt it remains an *honeſt* and *obedient*, *heart*. So that all men have very great reaſon, ſo far as they can by all *innocent* and *honeſt* wayes, to be *zealous* againſt them, and to uſe all the *lawful* care and caution that poſſibly they can, to avoid ſo powerful a *motive*, as a ſharp *perſecution* is, to tempt them to a thing ſo *unreaſonable* as is the *firſt*, and ſo *wicked* and *ſinful*, as is the *latter*.

So long then as men will moderate their *zeal* for the *unperſecuted* uſe of religious Ordinances, and profeſſion of religious Opinions, with this diſcretion; let them be *zealous* and *concerned* for it in God's Name. For it is their Duty ſo to be; and *God* will *reward*, and all *good* men *commend* them for it. If they take care that their *zeal tranſport* them not beyond their *own ſphere*, that it carry them not *againſt* their *Duty*, and that it be concerned in the *firſt* place for *Laws* and *practical opinions*; they may allow it after that to ſpend it ſelf upon other Points which have more of *ſpeculative truth*, but leſs of *practice*. This zeal now is *excellent*, 'tis truly *pious*, 'tis *religious*.

But

But if they have a *zeal* without *obedience*; if for preventing of perſecution in the profeſſion of true opinions, they run upon ſinful means and undutiful tranſgreſſions; their *zeal* is *ungodly*, and all their pretended care of *Religion* is plainly *irreligious*. For *Religion* is not beholding to them, but their own *luſts*; it condemns their diſobedient actions, and, unleſs their timely *repentance* prevent it, God will moſt ſeverely puniſh them. So that as for this *firſt* pretence for a *partial* obedience, *viz. our allowing our ſelves in the tranſgreſſion of ſome Laws, whilſt we obey in others*, becauſe *thoſe wherein we indulge our ſelves are neceſſary to keep off perſecution for the ſake of Religion*; it is a *vain, deceitful* ground, and will certainly fail any man who relies upon it.

CHAP. VII.

Of the two remaining pretences for a partial Obedience.

The CONTENTS.

The ſecond pretence for the allowed practice of ſome ſins whilſt men obey in others, is the ſerving of their neceſſities by ſinful arts in times of indigence. An account of mens diſobedience upon this pretence. The vanity of it, and the danger of diſobeying through it. A third pretence is bodily temper and complexion, age, and way of life. A repreſentation of mens diſobedience upon this pretence. The vanity of it, and the danger of ſinning through it. No juſtifying Plea for diſobedience from

our age. Nor from our way of life. Nor from our natural temper and complexion. So that this integrity of the object is excuſable upon no pretence. It was always required to mens acceptance.

ANother pretence whereby men juſtifie to their own thoughts the *allowed tranſgreſſion* of *ſeveral* Laws whilſt they *obey* in *others*, is the *ſerving of their neceſſities*; becauſe thoſe inſtances of diſobedience, wherein they indulge themſelves, are only ſuch *ſinful arts*, *compliances*, and *ſervices*, as are *neceſſary* to *relieve their want and indigence.*

They are in great ſtreights, and deep poverty; and ſince God has not provided *conveniencies*, nor it may be *neceſſaries* for them; they think that they may be allowed to be their own Guardians, and to uſe any means within their own compaſs, whereby they can make proviſion for their own ſelves. For they are born with the ſame *appetites* and *indigencies* as other men, and ſome way or other they muſt *ſatisfie* and *ſupply* them. And this they cannot do, if in *all* things they muſt religiouſly obey, and keep themſelves *intirely* innocent. They muſt *lye* and *over-reach*, *cheat* and *cozen*, if not *pilfer* and *ſteal*, to get *maintenance*. And they muſt alſo uſe *wicked arts*, and *ſinful compliances*, to get *favour*. For not having of their *own* wherewith to *relieve the wants*, to *comfort* the *weakneſſes*, and to *appeaſe* the *cravings* of their *natures*; they muſt be beholden, and cannot help it, to the *good will* and *kind charity* of *others*. And other men are *proud* and *humorous*, acted by *ſelf-will* and *vicious intereſts*; and will therefore reach out no help to them unleſs they pleaſe them, and do *any*, or *all* ſuch things, as they would have them do. They muſt *lye* and *diſſemble*, *fawn* and *flatter*, *drink* and *ſwear*, bear them *company* in their *ſins*, and *ſerve* their *vicious intereſts*,

interests, and *boggle* at no *sort* of *sinful arts* and *disobedient compliances*; or else they are not for their turn, nor must expect to feel any effects of their kindness.

This is the *hard fate*, and the *great temptation* of a *poor* and *indigent* condition. They who labour under it, are brought thus into a *seeming* necessity of many sins, because they cannot otherwise provide for their own *maintenance* and *appetites*. For God has made their nature *subject* to *several wants*; and he has made their condition *low*, so that they are unable to relieve themselves in any comfortable degree, but must depend, as for that, either upon the *fraud* and *over-reaching cunning* of their *own wits*, or upon the *good will* of *others*: and his Providence has placed them among such *Neighbours*, whose *kindness* and good will they cannot purchase, but at the *cost* of their *Vertue* and *Obedience*. And therefore if in this hard Case they disobey, they hope that he will excuse it. Their necessity they think will bear them out, so long as all their transgressions are only to provide for themselves, and for the competent satisfaction of their own appetites, where his Providence has left them unprovided.

This is the *wicked arguing* and *disobedient practice* of men of a *soft*, and *delicate Religion*. They will obey God in any thing, where they must not disoblige their appetites; but no further than they will suffer them. They are Servants of their own *Bellies* in the first place, and God shall have just so much, but no more, than they can spare him. For they will live easily, and want for nothing in *this* world, as well as be for ever happy in the *next*: and if God will allow them *both* these, then they are for him; but otherwise they have nothing to say, either to him, or his Religion. For they will not endure to *serve* a *man of sorrows*, to *follow Christ in wants*, to *be subjects* to that *Sovereign*, who has no *temporal* rewards

wards wherewith, even in *this* life, to *recompence* their *ſervice*. They will ſerve God juſt ſo long, as he will ſuffer them to ſerve themſelves and their own appetites; but if his ſervice doth not provide them all ſupplies, or croſſes the ſatisfaction of theſe, they beg of him that he would excuſe them. In other things they will ſerve him, if that will content him; but here charity muſt begin at home, and if they diſobey, he muſt give them a diſpenſation.

But God will not endure to be thus undervalued, and ſerved in the *ſecond* place. He can in no wiſe bear to have the world and our fleſhly appetites ſet above him; to ſee them ſerved, and himſelf ſleighted: becauſe by this means we do not honour, but debaſe; not ſerve, but renounce him. For he can be no faithful ſervant of God, who loves any thing better than his Maſter; nor is he truly united unto Chriſt, who can be drawn to diſobey him by any temptation. If we love any thing in the world then, though never ſo dear to us, better than him, we are utterly unworthy of him, and muſt never hope to be the better by him. For *he that loveth father or mother, ſon, or daughter, more than me*, ſaith he, *is not worthy of me*, Mat. 10. 37. Nay, he that hateth not theſe, and all things elſe when they ſtand in competition with my ſervice; *that hateth not*, I ſay not barely his worldly goods, and rich neighbours, but even his *father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, yea, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my diſciple*, Luke 14. 26.

If any cravings of our own fleſh then cannot be ſatisfied without diſobedience, we muſt not ſeek to *pleaſure*, but *ſubdue*; nor endeavour to *fulfill*, but to *deny* them. And if any wants or loſſes are brought ſo cloſe to us, that we cannot avoid them without *breach of duty*; they are the burden of the *Croſs* impoſed upon us,

us, and, unleſs we would caſt off all relation to Chriſt, we muſt not ſhun them. For *whoſoever doth not bear his Croſs*, ſayes our Saviour, when Gods Providence layes it upon his ſhoulders, *and come after me* even then when he muſt ſuffer under it; *he cannot be my diſciple*, Luke 14. 27.

This God peremptorily and indiſpenſably exacts of us; and there is all the reaſon in the world why he ſhould. For he will infinitely recompence in the *next* world, either the *want*, or loſs of all thoſe things, which, for his ſake, we are content to be without in *this*. *Heaven* and *eternal life* will be an abundant, and incomparably ſurpaſſing compenſation; all *the* wants and *ſufferings of this preſent time being*, as S. *Paul* ſayes, utterly *unworthy to be compared with that Glory, which ſhall* then *be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 18.

Let no man therefore diſobey Gods Laws for the love of the world, for the ſupplying of his wants, and the ſatisfaction of his appetites; and yet for all that perſwade himſelf that God will own him, and connive at his diſobedience. For in doing ſo, he plainly *renounces God*, and ſets the *World above* him; he makes his *Duty* truckle to his *Intereſt*; he ſlights *obedience*, and ſubmits to a *temptation*. He does the *work* of *ſin*, for the *intereſt* which *tempts* to it; and that will certainly bring upon him that *death*, which God has eſtabliſhed for the wages of it.

Thirdly, A third pretence whereby men juſtifie to their own ſouls the indulged tranſgreſſion of *ſeveral* Laws, whilſt they obey in *others*; is, becauſe thoſe tranſgreſſions wherein they allow themſelves, are only ſuch as are ſins of *temper* and *complexion*, *age*, or *way of life*.

Sometimes mens *place*, and *way of life*, is a continual *temptation* to ſome *particular* ſin; and if they may but have leave to indulge *that*, they will abandon every

other

other. The *Courtier* takes himself obliged by the fashion of his place, to *lies* and *dissimulation*, *ostentation* and *vanity*, to *sinful compliances*, and *faithless engagements*, to *promise all*, but to *perform nothing*. The *Merchant*, in pursuit of his *gain*, serves the end of his *trade* by *fraud* and *dishonesty*. He accounts it a piece of his *Art* to *over-reach*, to *defraud customs*, to *vend false wares*, and *set exacting prices*. The *Lawyer* thinks it a part of his *profession* to encourage *strife*, and foment *difference*; the *malice* and *revenge*, the *wrath* and *bitterness*, the *slanders* and *evil speakings*, the *strife* and *contentions*, which are *other* mens *sins*, are *his livelihood*. These sins, being ever before them, are alwayes a snare to them, for they are continually importuned by them, and it must be a toilsome pains, and an uninterrupted watchfulness, which can preserve them from being either won, or wearied into the commission of them. And since obedience in these instances is a thing which they can so very hardly spare; they hope that God in mercy will not exact it; but will graciously accept them upon their service in other particulars, although here they continue to disobey him.

Other sins men are invited and importunately tempted to by their *age* and *condition*, their *particular temper*, and *complexion*. *Lust* and *rashness* are the vices of *youth*, as *craft* and *covetousness* are of the *gray* hairs. Some sins are rooted in mens very *natures*; for some are naturally inclined to be *passionate* and *hasty*, some to be *peevish*, and others to be *malicious* and *revengeful*. The *temper* of their *bodies* hurries on some to *lust* and *intemperance*, some to *turbulency* and *fierceness*, and others to *slavish fears*, and *sinful compliances*. Nay, a *sharp* and *long affliction* will sometimes *embitter* even a *good n ture*, and make it *habitually sowre* and *fretful*, *peevish* and *morose*. So that mens very *natural temper*, their *age*,

pur

and *condition* prove many times an uninterrupted ſollicitation to *ſome* ſin or *other*, and they always fall, by being always under the power of their temptation.

Now when men find that ſome ſins have got thus near to them, and have taken ſuch deep root in their *way of life*, nay, in their *very natures*; ſince they will not be at the pains to reform and amend, they expect that God ſhould be ſo gracious, as to diſpenſe with them. As for all the inſtances of this kind, he muſt abate them, ſeeing they will not perform them; his pardoning goodneſs muſt ſupply all the defects of their ſloth. For God and they muſt ſtill be agreed, and therefore becauſe they cannot well abandon ſome of their darling luſts, and boſom ſins for his ſake; the compliance muſt fall on his ſide, and he muſt deſert and cancel all thoſe ſevere, and grating Laws, to ſerve and pleaſure them. They will obey him moſt willingly in all *other* things, only in theſe they beg that he would excuſe them: they will do any thing elſe for his ſake, which doth not contradict their beloved ſin, and never diſpleaſe him, but when they cannot otherwiſe fulfill and pleaſure it.

Thus, for inſtance, the *Covetous* man will obey in keeping back from *drunkenneſs* and *whoredom*, from *ambition*, and *profuſeneſs*, and all other ſins which are expenſive: But as for thoſe other duties of *ſuffering loſs our ſelves*, rather than *defrauding* and *over-reaching others*, of a *contented mind*, and *contempt of the world*, of *alms* and *beneficence*, and all the *chargeable* expreſſions of an *active love*, and an *operative charity*: here he ſtands upon his points, and chooſes to *diſpute* rather than to *perform*; to *article* rather than to *obey*.

The *peeviſh* and *angry* man will readily keep the commands of *Juſtice*, and *Temperance*; he will neither *ſpoil* his neighbours *Goods*, nor *wrong* his *Bed*, nor *pamper*

and *defile* his own body; he will do any thing, which either *miniſters* to his *reigning* luſt, or which doth not *contradict* and make againſt it. But then as for the commands of *meekneſs* and *patience*, of *long-ſuffering* and *forgiveneſs*, of *ſpeaking well*, and *doing good to enemies*, of *paſſing over provocations* and *peaceableneſs*, and all other inſtances of *pardoning*, and *forgetting injuries*; in theſe God muſt excuſe him, for his dear luſt oppoſes them, and he *can* not, he *will* not ſerve him in the practice of them.

Some who are of a *tractable* and *ſubmiſſive*, of a *ſoft* and *governable* temper, will obſerve readily all *thoſe* duties, which their *conſtitution* has made eaſie, and which their natural genius enclines them to. They will be conſtant performers of all the *cheap*, becauſe *agreeable* duties, of *ſubmiſſion* to *Governors*, and *obedience* to *publick Conſtitutions*, of *uniformity* in *worſhip*, of *honour* and *obſervance* of the *Laws* and *eſtabliſhments*, and of all things belonging to the *Churches Unity* and *outward peace*. But as for the *ſeverities* of an *inward* and *hearty* Religion, in *mortification* and *ſelf-denyal*, in *paring* off all *ſinful luſts*, and *exorbitant deſires*, in *patience*, and *taking up the Croſs*, and in all other *hard* inſtances of *duty* and a *holy life*: here they withdraw their ſervice, becauſe they muſt contradict their *natures*, and go againſt their *eaſe*; and ſet themſelves, not to *obey* theſe Laws, but to *evacuate* or *evade* them.

Whereas *others*, who are of a *temper* more *ſevere*, but withal of a *querulous* and *reſtleſs*, a *buſie*, and *ungovernable ſpirit*, will keep off from *atheiſm* and *prophaneneſs*, from *idolatry* and *witchcraft*, and *other heinous impieties*; from *drunkenneſs* and *revellings*, from *fornication* and *adultery*, from *oppreſſion*, and *fraud*, and other alike *groſs* and *notorious* inſtances of *injuſtice* and *immorality*. For all theſe their ſtrict temper can eaſily avoid; they have

have no great temptation to them, and are therefore able without much pains to abſtain from them. But then as for thoſe *other* ſins, which agree with the *bent* and inclination of their *buſie* and *ungovernable* humour; they will ſtill indulge themſelvs in the practice of them, for all they are of an *equal guilt*, although indeed of a more *ſpiritual* and *refined nature*. For they will ſtrive to *weary laws*, to *vilifie* and *contemn*, to *undervalue* and *diſparage Governours*; they will permit themſelves to be overſwayed by *ſpite* and *malice*, by *wrath* and *bitterneſs*, by *envy* and *emulation*, by *ſtrife* and *ſidings*; to be drawn aſide into *cenſoriouſneſs*, and *evil-ſpeakings*, into the *raiſing* and *ſpreading* of *uncharitable*, and *envious*, yea, *falſe*, and *ſlanderous reports*: they will be *forward* to *magnifie* themſelves, to *publiſh* their *own praiſe*, and to *boaſt* of their *own actions* and *attainments*; but withal to *detract* and *leſſen*, to *ſhame* and *diſparage others*.

Thus will even theſe men, who make the faireſt appearance of abominating all *impious* and *ungodly*, all *immoral* and *debauched* actions, *halt* ſtill in their obedience, and think to pleaſe God, not by a *perfect* and *entire*, but a *partial* and a *maimed ſervice*. For their *Converſion* goes but *half* way, not from *ſin* to *righteouſneſs*, but from *ſome ſorts* of ſin to *ſome others*. All the alteration that their Religion has wrought in them, is not a *forſaking* of ſin, but an *exchange* of it; a turn from what is more *eaſily* left, to a more *liberal* practice of that which they find it *hard* to part with; a *remove* from *groſſer*, and more *ſcandalouſly fleſhly* ſins, to other more *ſpiritual* and *refined*, but ſtill as *deadly* and *damnable tranſgreſſions*.

And thus, by all theſe inſtances it appears, that when men have got ſome ſins that are *cloſe* and *pleaſing*, ſuch as their *temper* and *complexion*, their *age*, or *condition*, or *way of life*, has *endear*'d to them ſo *far*, as that even

for *Gods* ſake they will not *part* with them; their recourſe is preſently to ſome more *cheap* and *eaſie* inſtances of *obedience*, that they may *atone* for them. And the ſame might be ſhewn in all other inſtances of a *partial*, and a *maimed ſervice*. In all things they will obey God no further than their beloved ſins will ſuffer them, but as *they* yield to the *Law* in *other* things, ſo muſt the *Law* yield to *them* in theſe; for neither God nor their *Sin* ſhall rule alone, but the ſervice ſhall be ſhared between them, and both ſhall enjoy a divided Empire.

But this is a moſt *damnably deluſive*, and a *deſperately falſe pretence*. For whatſoever fond conceits men who *Love*, and are reſolved not to *let go* their ſins, may pleaſe themſelves withal: yet God, when he comes to judge us, will accept of nothing leſs than an *entire* obedience. All his Laws are eſtabliſhed under the pains of death, and he will exact all that he has required, whatever, at that day, be our concern in it. For he comes not then, as a *corrupted party*, to judge *for us*, to make his own Laws bend and bow to ſerve our intereſts, and to cancel and diſanul all ſuch among them, as make againſt us. No, he comes, as an *upright* and *even Judge*, to execute all his Laws, but not to deſtroy any; he comes to inflict what his Goſpel threatens, and his ſentence will then be what *it* ſays, not what *we* can bear. So that if we have *wilfully diſobeyed*, and have not *repented*, whether in *one* inſtance or in *many*; we muſt undergo the *puniſhment* of our diſobedience. For God is a *friend* to *no* Vice, neither one nor other, but he alwayes *forbids*, and he will moſt ſeverely *puniſh every* one. And as for all theſe *pretenſes*, whether that of our *age*, or our *way of life*, or of our very *natural temper* and *inclination* it ſelf; there will be no *ſhelter* or *excuſe* in any of them to bear us out in *any*.

There

There is no protection to any ſin from our *Age*; for no *young* man may purſue *luſts* becauſe they are *youthful*, but is bound to *fly* and avoid them, as thoſe things *which war againſt*, and would deſtroy *his ſoul*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. Gods Laws make no *diſtinction* of *young* or *old*, but the *ſame Duties* are the Rule for *both* their *practices*; and the ſame *rewards* or *puniſhments* will be returned indifferently to them *both*, upon their *obedience* or *tranſgreſſions*.

There is no juſtifiable Plea for any ſin from our *way of life*; for a conſtant [a] *practice* or trade of *ſin*, as St. *John* ſays, can be no mans employment, but his who *is born of the Devil*, and muſt inherit under him, 1 *John* 3. 8. But the *way of life* whereunto God calls us, is a way of *piety* and *obedience*. He has given us his own Laws for the *way* which we are to walk in, and in that alone it is that we can eſcape *death*, and obtain *ſalvation*.

[a] ὁ ποιῶν ἁμαρτίαν.

Nay ſo far is any thing in the world from ſheltring us under the ſervice of any *one* ſin, that *even* that, which may have the higheſt pretence to it of all things *elſe* whatſoever, *viz.* our very *natural temper* and *inclination*, is no *excuſe* to us, if it makes us continue in any diſobedience. If any thing in the world could be a juſt defence for the practice of any ſin, ſurely this muſt. For our Nature is not of our own chuſing; and therefore its effects ought leaſt of all to be charged on us, ſeeing they leaſt of all proceed from us, but are in great degrees determined to our hands before we have any power, either to *will*, or to *refuſe* them. But ſuch is the *purity* and *ſtrictneſs* of *Chriſt's Goſpel*, that it indiſpenſably requires us to conquer ſin, not only where it makes no *oppoſition*, but even where it has the *greateſt ſtrength*, and the *higheſt force* of all. For if our very *Nature* draw us on to *diſobey*, it *enjoins* us under all our *hopes of Heaven* not to *ſubmit* to it, but to [b] *ſtrive* againſt

[b] Pſal. 18. 22, 23.

againſt it ſo long, till we *vanquiſh* and *ſubdue* it. For if we would be judged to be *Chriſt's Diſciples* at the laſt Day, we muſt *deny our ſelves*, Matth. 16. 24. As we hope to *live*, we muſt not perform and *fulfil*, but kill
c Col. 3. 5. and *c mortifie* thoſe *deeds*, whereto we are hurried on by the temper *of our Bodies*, Rom. 8. 13. We muſt renounce and forſake all ſin, although never ſo *dear* and *uſeful* to us, before Chriſt's Goſpel will acquit, or he will ſave us. *If* a luſt ſo dear to thee as *thy right eye*
d Σκανδαλίζει. *offend thee*, or *d* cauſe thee to offend; *pluck it out*, ſayes our Saviour, *and caſt it from thee:* or *if* one ſo uſeful to thee as *thy right hand*; *cut it off* likewiſe, *and caſt it from thee:* and that for no leſs reaſon than this, *Becauſe it is* more *profitable for thee that one of thy members ſhould* in this manner *periſh*, than *that thy whole body ſhould be caſt* for ever *into Hell fire*, Matth. 5. 29, 30.

Thus vain and helpleſs are all *theſe* excuſes and pretenſions, under which men endeavour to ſhelter themſelves in the indulged tranſgreſſion of ſome Laws, whilſt they obey in others. For whether their pretence be the *ſaving of their Religion from times of perſecution*, or the *ſerving of their neceſſities in times of want*, or the *ſatisfying of their own natural temper and inclination*; we ſee that none of them can juſtifie their indulged allowance of any *one* ſin, nor ſerve any other turn, than to delude them to their own deſtruction.

But whoſoever would obey to his own ſalvation, muſt obey in *every* inſtance, and continue wilfully to tranſgreſs in *none*. He muſt never hope to pleaſe God by performing nothing but what he liſts himſelf. No, every *particular* Law of God, as we ſaw above, is bound upon us by all our *hopes of Heaven*, and under the *pains of Hell*; ſo that we cannot tranſgreſs in any, and yet be ſafe: but that obedience which can ſecure us, is nothing leſs than performing in every inſtance.

For

For this *third* ſort of integrity, *viz.* that of the *Object*, or performing *all* and *every* of thoſe Laws which God has given us, both *is*, and *alwayes was*, indiſpenſably required to *life* and *pardon* ſince the world began.

Thee have I ſeen righteous before me, ſaid God to *Noah*, becauſe *Noah did according to ALL that the Lord commanded him*, Gen. 7. 1, 5. And in the repetition of the *ten Commandments*, Deut. 5. *O that they would fear me*, ſayes God to the Jews, *and keep* e *all my Commandments, alwayes, that it might be well with them for ever*, ver. 29. It is nothing leſs than our obeying in *all*, which God declares that he will accept; and upon nothing leſs than their *performing all*, that good men have hoped to be accepted. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *when I have reſpect unto* f *all thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 6, 7. Thoſe perſons to whom the *Lord doth good* and ſhews kindneſs, are only the *upright in heart*. But as for them, who although they are right as to the main, do yet *turn aſide* in ſome things *to their crooked wayes, he will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity*, Pſal. 125. 4, 5.

e Exod. 23. 21, 22.

f Pſal. 119. 2, 3. & Pſal. 18. 22, 23, 24.

And as this integrity in *doing the whole will of God*, was required of *Noah* before the *Law*, and of the *Jews under* it; ſo is it likewiſe exacted every whit as ſtrictly of us *Chriſtians* under the *Goſpel*. For the obedience of that *Covenant*, whereinto *Chriſt* commiſſions his *Apoſtles* to *baptize Converts*, is nothing below an *intire* obedience. *Go*, ſayes he, *and baptize all Nations, teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you*, Matth. 28. 19, 20. And this is no more than what he himſelf had preached before, in his own Sermon upon the Mount. For of the *Moral Law* and the *Prophets*, (which he came to *confirm* and *eſtabliſh*) and alſo of his *own Law*, (which he came then to *publiſh* and *proclaim*) he affirms plainly, That the obſervance

obſervance of it in *every particular*, is neceſſary to the attainment of *God's favour* and *eternal life*. *He that breaks the* very *leaſt of theſe Commandments, ſhall be called leaſt* (or ſhall *be* leaſt, or none at all, which is the ſenſe of the Hebrew Phraſe) *in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 17, 18, 19. And agreeably to this *Pattern*, and this *Commiſſion*, the *Apoſtles* themſelves when they came afterwards to diſcharge their Office, did moſt ſtrictly require it, and moſt ſeverely threaten all thoſe in whom it was wanting, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves*, ſays St. *Paul*, *from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord*, as we hope to attain thoſe good things which he has *promiſed* 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. There is no remedy, but we muſt either do this or dye. *For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt*, not only ſome, but *all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*, Rom. 1. 18. The Curſe takes place upon the tranſgreſſion in any inſtance. For the threatning is not barely to ſome *one*, or to ſome *few* Laws; but to the *whole Code* which comprehends them all: ſo that if we tranſgreſs any *one*, the Covenant is broken, and the penalty takes place. For *whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law* beſides, ſaith St. *James*, *and yet offend in one Point*, that ſubjects him to all the evil, and *he is guilty of*, or obnoxious to that puniſhment, which is appointed for the wages of one and *all*, James 2. 10.

As for this *integrity of the object* therefore, or mens obedience to the *whole will* of God; we ſee that in all *times* and *ages* it was *neceſſary* unto *life*, and indiſpenſably required to *ſalvation*. For neither the Sons of the *Patriarchs*, nor the Subjects of *Moſes*, nor the Servants of *Chriſt*; no Profeſſors of any *true Religion* in the World, were ever accepted upon any ſervice leſs than *intire*, upon any obedience that was *maimed* and *defective*. But ſo much as he thought fit to enjoyn, God always exacted

exacted of men that they ſhould perform; ſo that if they did not obey in *all*, they ſhould certainly be condemned as if they had done *nothing*.

So that as for this *third* ſort of *integrity*, *viz.* our obedience to the *whole will* of God, or to all the *particular* Laws fore-mentioned, which is the *integrity of the Object*; *it*, as well as both the *former*, is plainly *neceſſary* to our acceptance, and to render our *obedience available* to our *ſalvation*.

And thus at *laſt* it appears what that *integrity* is, which will render our obedience to all the *particular* Laws of God above recounted acceptable in God's ſight. For it is nothing leſs than an obedience of the *whole man*, to the *whole Law*, and that not for ſome *ſhort*, but for our *whole* time, and to the *end* of our lives. He who thus *intirely* obeys, cannot, as was before obſerved, be other than *ſincere*; and he who obeys *ſincerely* and *uprightly*, has all that God requires of him, enough to ſupport his hopes, and to ſecure his happineſs. *Sincerity* and *uprightneſs* is neither more, nor leſs than is exacted of us; without them we ſhall ſurely dye, but through them we cannot miſs of being happy eternally.

CHAP. VIII.

Of obeying with all the heart, and all the ſoul, &c.

The CONTENTS.

Of obeying God *with all the heart, and with all the ſtrength,* &c. *It excludes not all deſire and endeavour after other things, but it implies,* Firſt, *Sincerity.* Secondly, *Fervency.* Thirdly, *Integrity, or obeying, not ſome, but all the Laws of God. Theſe three include all that is contained in it; which is ſhewn from their obedience, who are ſaid in Scripture to have fulfilled it. Integrity implies ſincerity and fervency, and Love with all the heart is explained in the places where it is mentioned, by loving him entirely. Sincerity and uprightneſs the Conditions of an acceptable Obedience. This a hard Condition in the degeneracy of our manners; but that is our own fault. It was eaſie and univerſally performed by the primitive Chriſtians. This ſhewn from the Characters of the Apoſtles, and of the Primitive Writers. Hence it was that they could deſpiſe Death, and even provoke Martyrdom. Some Pleas from our impotence againſt the ſtrictneſs of this obedience, which are conſidered in the next Book.*

NOW as for this *intire* obedience of the *whole man*, at *all times*, to the *whole will* of God, whereof I have hitherto diſcourſed in the foregoing *Chapters*; it is that *very* obedience *with all the heart, and with all the ſoul, and with all the mind, and with all the ſtrength*, which is ſo expreſly called for in the words

of

of the Commandment, *Luke* 10. 27. *Deut.* 11. 13.

It is not to be expected that *all our heart*, and *all our mind*, and *all our ſoul*, and *all our ſtrength* ſhould be ſo *wholly* devoted to God, as that we ſhould never either *will*, or *think*, or *deſire*, or *do* any *other* thing than what he has *commanded* us. No, that is a Dream of utter *abſurdities* and *impoſſibilities*. For God has not only *allowed* us, but he has made it plainly *neceſſary* for us to employ our *thoughts*, and *deſires*, and *endeavours*, upon ſeveral other things beſides *himſelf* and his *Commandments*. Becauſe we cannot live without *meat* and other *neceſſaries*, and theſe we cannot *get* without *ſeeking*, nor *ſeek* without *deſiring*, nor *deſire* without *thinking* on them. All the *innocent enjoyments of Nature*, and all the *neceſſaries of life*, all the *laudable advantages of converſe*, and all the *lawful benefits of trade* and *employment*, require our *minds*, and *hearts*, and *ſouls*, and *ſtrength*, as well as *God* and our *Duty*; all our Powers not only *may* be exerciſed about them, but they needs *muſt*. For God himſelf has ſo ordained it, it being a neceſſity of his own making; ſo that we muſt employ our endeavours about them, and we cannot do otherwiſe. And therefore when the Commandment calls for all *our hearts*, and *all our ſtrength*, &c. it is utterly *abſurd* and *unreaſonable* to underſtand it of ſuch an *all*, as excludes the exerciſe of theſe faculties upon any thing beſides. It doth not ingroſs all our power to God's uſe *alone*, and ſhut out all other things from any place in them; but *may*, and *muſt* be underſtood ſo, as to leave room for them likewiſe.

But all that is included in the *latitude* of that expreſſion, *with all thy heart*, &c. is ſet out, agreeably to the uſe of the Phraſe at other times, in theſe *three* Particulars.

1. It notes the *ſincerity* and *undiſſembledneſs* of our

faculties; ſo as the Phraſe, *with all the heart*, ſignifies the ſame as in *ſimplicity* and *honeſty*, without *guile* or a *double heart*. For a diſſembling hypocritical man has *one* heart in *ſhew*, and *another* in *reality*. His heart is not *one intire* thing, but *double* and *divided*. He appears to *will* what indeed he doth *not will*, and to *deſire* what in truth he doth *not deſire*; ſo that his whole heart doth not go together, that which he *outwardly* profeſſes being *one*, but that which he *inwardly* intends *another*. And this *ſimplicity* and *ſincere* honeſty of intention, is expreſſed in the courſe of our common ſpeech by this Phraſe, *all the heart*; nothing being more uſual in our daily converſe, than to give aſſurances of our ſincerity in any thing which we do, by ſaying it is with *all our heart*. And as *ſincerity* is expreſſed by *all the heart*, ſo on the contrary is *diſſimulation* and *hypocriſie* ſet out by a *double heart*. And thus the *men of war*, who were *faithful to David*, and *undiſſembled* in their ſervice of him, are ſaid *not to have been of a double heart*, Pſal. 12. 2. Which ſenſe the word *double* has, not only when it is applyed to this *particular* faculty, *viz.* our *wills* and *hearts*, but alſo when it is attributed to any *other*. And thus we read of a *double*, that is, of a *diſſembling tongue*, 1 Tim. 3. 8.

2. This Phraſe, *all the heart*, &c. implies the *fervency* and *concernedneſs of our faculties*. And thus the Latines uſe the word *whole*, when they expreſs their being *very buſie*, or *induſtriouſly intent* upon a thing, by ſaying they are * *whole upon it*.

* *Totus in hoc ſum.*

And as this Phraſe, *all the heart*, &c. in reſpect of our *faculties* themſelves, denotes theſe *two* things, *viz. ſincerity*, and *fervency*; ſo likewiſe in reſpect of their *object*, or that *will of God* which they are to be employed about, doth it imply

3. *Integrity*, ſo as that this *fervency* and *ſincerity* be ſhewn

ſhewn in obeying, not *ſome*, but *all* the Commandments; not *part*, but the *whole will* of God. For our *heart*, and *ſoul*, and *ſtrength*, muſt be *all* or *whole* for God; that is, they muſt be *conſtant* and *uniform*, not *various* and *divided*, being ſometimes *for* him, and at other times *againſt* him. They muſt be for *all* things which he commands, and for *nothing* that he forbids; for we muſt neither *think*, nor *deſire*, nor *do* any thing againſt him. And in this ſenſe the word *all* or *whole*, is oppoſed to *divided*; and expreſſes thus much, that our faculties do not ſtand *for* ſome commands, and *againſt* others; that they do not *divide* and *parcel*, *pick* and *chuſe* with *Gods Laws*; but that they obey *wholly* and *univerſally*, obſerving *all* and every *one*.

Now theſe *three*, (viz.) the *ſincerity* and *fervency* of our *faculties*, and the *integrity* of our *obedience*, which are conveniently expreſſed by the word *all*, or *whole*, are all indiſpenſably required of us; as appears plainly from what has been above diſcourſed upon this ſubject. So that they are *all* implied in the latitude of this Commandment: *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind*, &c.

But beſides them nothing elſe is. For if we ſhould extend that precept further, and make it include all that the largeſt compaſs of thoſe words would comprehend; we ſhould give it a ſenſe which is, as I ſaid, *abſurd*, and utterly *impoſſible*.

And to clear this a little more, wherewith ſo many good ſouls are oft-times perplexed, we may further obſerve, that thoſe very men, who *will'd*, and *thought*, and *deſired*, and *acted other* things, as well as Gods *Laws*; are yet in the Scriptures expreſly recorded to have *performed* all that is meant in this Commandment, becauſe they ſerved God in the *particulars* which I have mention'd, (viz.) *ſincerely*, *fervently* and *entirely*. For

b Caleb

a Num. 14. 24. Deut. 1. 36.

b Caleb and *Joshua* are said to have *followed the Lord wholly*, Numb. 32. 12. *David kept my Commandments*, saith God, *and followed me with all his heart*, 1 Kings 14. 8. *Josiah did what was right in the sight of the Lord*, 2 Kings 22. 2. Now these persons were men, not only of as great *necessities* as others, but also of *far higher place*, and *greater business* in the world. For their station required them to be much employed about it, and to spend *frequent thoughts*, and *many desires*, and *great pains* upon it. So that their *whole heart*, and *mind*, and *soul*, and *strength*, could not be employed in Gods service any otherwise, than as they loved and served him *entirely*, and *above* all things; and neither *will'd*, nor *acted* any thing besides, when it stood in competition with him. The *sincerity*, *fervency*, and *integrity* of their service, was all which they had to shew in answer to this Commandment; and upon the account of them God did accept them, and has left it on record to all the world that they have *fulfilled* it.

As for the last of these, (*viz.*) *Integrity*, it indeed includes in it all the *rest*. For it is the greatest warranty and effect of *fervency*, and the best evidence of the *sincerity* of our service. Because this, as I said * before, is the great *measure* of *acceptance* in our *thoughts* and *affections*, (viz.) *that they carry us on to acceptable works and actions*. And this is the great † Rule whereby to judge of a *sincere service*, (viz.) *that men be universal and entire in their obedience*. So that if once we perform *all* that God requires of us; there is no further question to be made but that we perform it *honestly*, and with that *fervency* and concernedness, which is *sufficient* to our *acceptance*.

* Book 3. Chap. 2.

† Book 3. Chap. 1.

And this *integrity* of obedience including *both* the other, is that very thing which is meant by the service with *all the heart*, and with *all the soul*, which is exact-

ed

ed of us in the Commandment. Whereof we have ſtill a further argument, becauſe in almoſt all the places where any man is ſaid to fulfill *this*, we find *that* annexed as its explication: Which is a plain interpretation of the Scripture to it ſelf, that *to obey with all our powers* in its ſence is nothing elſe, but to be *uniform*, *undivided*, and *entire* in our obedience.

David, ſayes God, *followed me with all his heart*; which appears in this, becauſe he followed me ſo as to fulfill all my will, and to act nothing againſt it, but *to do that only which is right in mine eyes*, 1 Kings 14. 8. *Caleb and Joſhua followed the Lord wholly*; which was ſeen in that their obedience was entire to him, and they did not tranſgreſs in thoſe particular Laws of Duty, by the breach whereof others provoked him, *Numb.* 32. 10, 11, 12. And of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, S. *Luke* ſayes that they were *blameleſs*, becauſe *they walked*, not in ſome, but *in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord*, Luke 1. 6. But on the other ſide, as for all ſuch as were *partial* in their obedience to God, and kept ſome inſtances of duty, but tranſgreſſed others according as they themſelves liſted; they are ſaid *not to be whole* in their *hearts* and *other faculties* towards him. *Jehu*, ſayes the Text, *took no heed to walk in the Law of the God of Iſrael with all his heart*, for of this there is a clear proof, in that his heart run after ſome ſins as well as ſome duties, *he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam*, although he did from others, 2 *Kings* 10. 31. *If you return unto the Lord with all your heart*, ſayes *Samuel*, *then put away* that particular ſin which you ſtill adhere to, *your ſtrange Gods, and ſerve him only*, 1 Sam. 7. 3. And that this is true in every mans caſe, as well as it was in theirs, the Pſalmiſt plainly aſſures us, when he layes it down for an univerſal maxim, that *they ſeek the Lord with their whole heart, who do no iniquity*, Pſal. 119. 2, 3.

And

And thus upon all these accounts it appears, that *to serve the Lord with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength*, according to the *tenour of the Commandment*; is neither *more* nor *less*, than to serve him *universally* and *entirely*. For it *can* bear no other sense, because upon *no greater* or *better service than this*, *God himself has declared that men have served him with all their heart* according to the Commandment; and more cannot be *required*, when this *fulfills* it. It can mean no *more*, because that *all which it should mean further is impossible in the present condition of humane nature*, and therefore is no fit matter of a Law, nor subject to a Commandment. And lastly, it *doth* mean no more, because the *Scriptures themselves, where they set it down, are wont to annex this interpretation*, and thus explain it.

And thus at last we have seen what *degrees*, and *manner of obedience* to all the Laws recounted in the former Book, is necessary to our acceptance. For we must obey *sincerely* and *entirely*, if ever we expect to reap the rewards of obedience. We must keep *every particular Law* of God, and that through our *whole lives*: we must *think* on them in our *minds*, and *pursue* them with our *affections*, and *chuse* them with our *wills* so *far*, till we *perform* them with our *strength*, in *outward* and *bodily operation*. This *uprightness* of obedience, which is a certain evidence of its *sincerity*, is all that Gods Law requires of us; and it will infallibly save us at the last day, although less than it nothing in the world will.

As for that condition of life and pardon then, which the Gospel indispensably exacts of us, we now see plainly what it is. For it is *nothing else but our obedience to all the forementioned Laws of God* in *sincerity* and *uprightness*. It is by this that all the world must stand or fall at the last day; according to their performance or neglect

leſt whereof they ſhall then be judged, either to live, or dye eternally.

This indeed, though it be a very *great*, will ſeem a very *uncouth* and *ſevere* truth in the degeneracy of manners, and looſe lives of our times. But if it do, that is wholly our own fault, and can be no prejudice at all to the declarations of Chriſts Goſpel. For our Lord has proclaimed it to us plainly enough, and if our own wicked hearts make us ſhut our eyes, and willing to overlook it; for that we muſt blame our ſelves, but can never hope thereby to evacuate his ſentence. This in very deed is the Goſpel that he has publiſhed, and theſe are the terms of mercy which he has procured for us: So that if we live up to them, we ſhall be ſaved by him; but if we fail to perform theſe gracious demands, we have no benefit at all by his death, nor any ground of hope from his Goſpel. All that can be ſaid is, that he offered us Grace and Pardon upon moſt fair and eaſie terms, but that we would not accept them. But we preferred the pleaſure of our ſins before all the glory of his rewards, and choſe to hazard all thoſe evils which he threatned, rather than to be at the pains to perform that condition, which he peremptorily injoyned.

But although by our wicked lives we in theſe dayes caſt off the *light* yoke of Chriſt as *over-burdenſome*, and make the Covenant of *Grace* it ſelf to become a *rigorous* condition: yet once the caſe was otherwiſe, and the world was more *Chriſtian*. For they who profeſſed Chriſts Religion then, performed all that he commanded, and practiſed all that, which, as we have ſeen, his Goſpel doth injoyn. And to go no further for an evidence of this, we will take thoſe accounts of the obedience of Chriſtians in the firſt times, which the *Apoſtles* themſelves give us.

You, ſayes the Apoſtle to the *Coloſſians*, *that were ſometimes*, in your Gentile State, *alienated* from God, *and enemies in your minds, by* means of your *wicked works*; *yet now*, ſince you became Chriſtians, *hath he reconciled in his death, to preſent you holy, and umblameable, and unreproveable*, according to the terms of the Goſpel, *in his ſight*, Col. 1. 21, 22. And to the ſame purpoſe he ſpeaks of the *Epheſians* yet more fully. *You*, ſaith he, *hath God quickned* by the preaching of the Goſpel, *who*, before you heard of that, *were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, wherein, in times paſt* of Gentiliſm, *ye walked*, as well as others, *according to the* wicked *courſe of this world, according to* the inſtigation of *the Prince of the powers in the air*, who is *the ſpirit that* both aforetime, and even *now worketh in the children of diſobedience. Among whom alſo we all*, as I ſay, *had our converſation in times paſt*, living, juſt as they did, *in the luſts of our fleſh, fulfilling* and performing *the deſires of our fleſh, and were* thereby *the children of wrath as well as others. But God, even when we were thus dead in ſins, hath*, upon our embracing of Chriſts Religion, *quickned us together with Chriſt*, by that ſame ſpirit whereby he raiſed up him, *Epheſ.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. But the character which he gives of the *Corinthians* is more particular and compleat ſtill. *No unrighteous*, ſaith he, of one ſort or other, *ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* For *neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, ſhall inherit the kingdom of God. And ſuch* indeed as theſe *were ſome of you* once, (*viz.* in your Gentiliſm;) *but* ſince you were Chriſtned I bear you record, that *you are waſhed* from thoſe impurities, that *you are ſanctified* from thoſe wickedneſſes, and that *you are juſtified* from the condemning force of all theſe Commandments *in the name of the Lord*

Lord Jeſus, and by the help of *the* enlivening and converting *ſpirit of our God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. Theſe places are very full and particular for the *power of Chriſtianity*, and the *perfect* and *entire obedience* of *Chriſtians*, in *thoſe dayes*. And yet there is one teſtimony more of this Apoſtle, which I muſt not omit, becauſe it is ſo very comprehenſive; and that is the account which he gives us of the Reformation, which the Goſpel wrought among the *Romans*. For before it was preached among them, they were *ſtrangely debauched*, and *unaccountably wicked*; as we may be fully informed, were there no other regiſter of their vices, from that prodigious Catalogue of their ſins, which S. *Paul* himſelf has given us, *Rom.* 1. For *they worſhipped and ſerved the Creature* Verſe 25.
more than the Creator. Their very *women* were ſo unna- 26.
tural in their luſts, as to *change their natural uſe, into that which is againſt nature.* And *the men, leaving the* 27.
natural uſe of the women, burned in their luſts towards one another, men with men working that which is unſeemly. They were filled with all unrighteouſneſs, fornication, 29.
wickedneſs, covetouſneſs, maliciouſneſs; being full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whiſperers, back-biters, 30.
haters of God, deſpiteful, proud, boaſters, inventers of evil things, diſobedient to parents, without underſtanding, 31.
covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. Thus had they degenerated from all ſenſe of *common honeſty*, and *honour*; and fallen into the *vileſt ſink* of *vices*. But when once Chriſtianity took place among them, it quickly turned them from a moſt *impious* and *monſtrouſly unclean*, into a moſt *religious* and *holy* people. For ſo S. *Paul* himſelf bears witneſs to them. *You were*, ſayes he, in your time of Heatheniſm, *the ſervants*, nay, the rankeſt ſlaves *of ſin, but God be thanked that ye have* now, ſince you became Chriſtians, *obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, which*

was by us Apoſtles *delivered to you.* For *being made free from* that ſtrange inventory of *ſins*, *ye became the ſervants of righteouſneſs*, Rom. 6. 17, 18. And what S. *Paul* tells us of *theſe particular* Churches under his care; S. *Peter* will alſo inform us was true of *all* the Churches in *Pontus* and *Aſia* with whom he was concerned, and to whom he directed his *firſt* Epiſtle. *The time paſt of our life may ſuffice us*, ſaith he, *to have wrought the will of the Gentiles; when we walked* with them *in laſciviouſneſs, luſts, exceſs of wine, revellings, banquettings, and abominable idolatries.* Yea, indeed this doth ſuffice us. For ſince we became Chriſtians, we have left off to accompany them in theſe vices, for which they are eſtranged to us, and revile us. For *they think it ſtrange that we run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot* as we uſed formerly, *ſpeaking evil of us* for abſtaining from them, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3, 4.

Thus honeſt was the ſervice, and thus entire was the obedience of Chriſtians in the Apoſtles dayes. And when *they* had finiſhed their courſe, and were called out of the world, Chriſts Goſpel had ſtill the ſame effects, and his ſubjects continued to pay him the ſame ſervice. *b As for the Religion and Laws of Chriſt*, ſayes *Lactantius, what excellent effects they have upon the minds and lives of men, is plain from every dayes experience. For give me a man that is fierce, haſty, and ungovernable; and with this Law I will make him as tractable and gentle as a lamb. Give me one who is covetous, greedy and tenacious; this Religion ſhall quickly make him liberal and generous.*

b *Dei autem præcepta, quantum valeant in animis hominum, quotidiana experimenta demonſtrant. Da mihi virum qui ſit iracundus, maledicus, effræna-tus: pauciſſimus Dei verbis tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tenacem; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo, & pecuniam ſuam plenis manibus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mortis; jam cruces, & ignes, & Phalaridis taurum contemnet. Da libidinoſum, adulterum, ganeonem; jam ſobrium, caſtum, continentem videbis. Da crudelem, & ſanguinis appetentem; jam in veram clementiam ſuror ille mutabitur. Da injuſtum, inſipientem, peccatorem; continuo & æquus, & prudens, & innocens erit. Uno enim lavacro malitia omnis abolebitur; pauca Dei præcepta ſic totum hominem immutant, & expoſito vetere, novum reddunt, ut non cognoſcas eundem eſſe.* Lactant. de Falſ. Sap. l. 3. c. 26.

generous. It will make the cowardly and timerous, to become bold and venturous; the lustful and intemperate, to turn chaste and sober; the cruel and revengeful, to grow merciful and placable. In one word, it works a perfect change and alteration, making the wicked and injurious, to become forthwith most innocent and holy men. For all manner of sin is renounced at their entrance, all filthy habits are washt off at the Font, and never again resumed. They are so wholly altered in their life and temper by embracing of our Faith, that you will scarce know them to be the same men. Thus were the *Christians* in those dayes the holiest sort of men, and the most noble patterns of Vertue and Goodness: being *c distinguishable from other men*, as *Tertullian* sayes, *in nothing so much as this, That they had left off all their former vices.* For they lived what they taught, and performed what others only could discourse of; their common *Motto* being this, *d Although we have not the skill to talk, yet we have the Grace to live as well as any.* Nay, their very *enemies* themselves, who would be sure to spare no pains nor skill in fastening some *immoralities* upon them, were yet forced at last to confess that they had no fault but one; and that was, that they were *called Christians*: For it is a known Story and usage which *Tertullian* complains of, that the very Heathens themselves could not but cry out, *e Such or such a one is a very good man, bating only this, That he is a Christian.*

c *Non aliunde noscibiles, quam de emendatione vitiorum pristinorum.* Tertul. ad Scap. c. 2.

d *Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus.* Cypr. de bono patientiæ. Ed. Rig. p. 222.

e *Bonus vir Caius Sejus, sed malus tantum quod Christianus.* Tertul. Apol. c. 3.

And when the World of Christians were thus intirely obedient, and compleatly virtuous; it was no wonder that they could so bravely despise *Death*; and not only *suffer*, but even *seek* and *f provoke martyrdom*. They durst dye for the Gospel, because they were sure to *g* live by it. For they performed all that it required,

f *Quid facies de tantis millibus hominum, tot virisac fœminis omnis Sexus, omnis Ætatis, omnis Dignitatis, offerentibus se tibi?* Tertul. ad Scap. c. 4.

g ἐγὼ μαχαῖρα, ἐγὼ θεῷ, μέλαξυ θηρίον, μέλαξυ θεῷ. Ignat. Epist. ad Smyrn.

and

and were thereby ſecure of all the happineſs which it promiſed: and when by this means, Death was become to them only a paſſage to a moſt glorious and eternal life; it had nothing in it that could fright them. All *Sorts*, *Sexes*, and *Ages*, had lived their Religion ſo well, that they feared not to dye for it; but with the moſt undaunted courage, and *h* aſſured hope, they every where in great numbers ſealed their profeſſion with their blood, and gave teſtimony to the truth of their Faith with their own lives.

h Τελευτάν-θεν ἐν πεποι-θήσει πίστεως καὶ ἁγάπης, is S. *Clement's* Character of good men, 1 *Ep. ad Cor.* c. 26.

And now if we fall ſhort of that obedience that God requires, and which was performed by former Ages; whoſe fault is that, or who muſt in reaſon ſuffer for it? For Chriſt's Goſpel is the very ſame that it was *ſixteen* hundred years ago, the Precepts are ſtill unchanged, and the penalty altogether unaltered. It alwayes was, and alwayes will be the ſame Rule of Faith, and the ſame meaſure of mercy or damnation. And therefore if we loſe what it promiſes, we may thank our ſelves for neglecting what it enjoyns. For the ſame terms of life have ſtood fixt hitherto, and ſhall ſtand through all Ages; the *primitive* Chriſtians kept, and were ſaved by them, and if we break them, we ſhall certainly be condemned for them.

How ſmall ſoever therefore that be, which in theſe looſe times *men perform*; yet an intire obedience is that which *God* indiſpenſably *enjoyns*. It is the peremptory Demand of his Goſpel, and will at the laſt Day be the inviolable Rule of his Judgment. It ſaved the *ancient Chriſtians*, and leſs than it nothing in the World will ſave *us*.

But this, ſome will be ready to ſay, inſtead of a *gracious* and *merciful*, is a very *rigorous* and *ſevere* Condition. It binds us to more than is in our power, and threatens us for what we cannot help, and is a task too heavy for

any

any *meer man*, and proportioned only to the ſtrength of an *Angel*. For to obey *all God's Laws*, and that *at all times*, who is ſufficient? God's Laws themſelves are not Rules ſo general, as to admit of no exception. For we are commanded, for inſtance, to live in *peace*; but yet ſometimes we *may*, and *muſt* be engaged in *ſtriving* and *contention*. And as it is in *this*, ſo it is in *other* parts of Duty; the Commandment holds not in every Caſe, but ſome are excepted. And who now is of an underſtanding ſo diſcerning and ſagacious, as to ſee in all things where he is faſt and where he is looſe, and never to miſtake that for his liberty, which is indeed his Duty? To be infallible in judgment, and to think right in all things, is the property of a God, not of a man; and if through this weakneſs of underſtanding, whereto all mankind are ſubject, we are *ignorant* at any time and do not ſee, or *erroneous* and miſtake our Duty; how is it poſſible that we ſhould in *all inſtances*, and at all times, *perform* and *fulfill* it?

But even where we do know God's Law, yet neither there can we always obſerve it. For ſince we have many other things to do beſides our Duty, and opportunities for action call frequently upon the ſudden; we are oft-times drawn to act before we have *time* to think, and ſo, although we know what we ſhould do in the *general*, yet in this *particular* Caſe we have not leiſure to *attend* to it. We are ſurprized into action e're we are aware, and perform before we can conſider; and therefore, as the chance happens, many times do ill, becauſe we have not time to look about us, and to ſee what is well doing.

But if an opportunity for ſome ſin happen when we are at leiſure to conſider of it, and to avoid it; yet many times, although for the *preſent* it doth not, *afterwards* it ſhall win upon us. For all temptations do not come

come upon us ſuddenly, and paſs away as ſuddenly again; but ſome *ſtay long* with us, and perſiſt to obtrude themſelves upon us. And although we can conſider for a while, and watch well, and reſiſt long; yet ſuch is the imperfection of our very faculties, that they cannot be held long at ſtretch, but they will at laſt grow *weary*. They will be tired out by continuing ſo ſtrict a Guard, and begin at laſt to remit of their care, and to ſlacken their diligence: and when they unbend, the temptation increaſes, and our luſts take advantage; ſo that albeit we were not ſurprized at firſt, yet we ſhall at laſt, and be tired and wearied into a tranſgreſſion.

And ſince all theſe, with others, are infirmities not only *incident* to, but *inſeparable* from our Natures, and ſuch as we cannot throw off till we ſhake off our Bodies, and all converſe with the tempting world: how can it be thus exacted of us, who cannot always ſtand upright, that we ſhould never fall, but obey God intirely, in *all things*, and at *all times*?

But to give a clear anſwer to theſe difficulties, which are here with great truth objected; having ſhewn that *Obedience is the Condition which is indiſpenſably required of us*, and *what thoſe particular Laws are which we are to obey*, and *what degrees and meaſures of obedience is required to them*: I ſhall now proceed to enquire into that which I promiſed in the next place, *viz. What are the mitigations and allowances of this Condition of happineſs, and what thoſe defects are which it bears and diſpenſes with*; of which in the *next* Book.

BOOK

BOOK IV.

Shewing what defects are conſiſtent with a regenerate ſtate, and diſpenſed with in the Goſpel.

CHAP. I.

Shewing in general that ſome ſins are conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace.

The CONTENTS.

Some failings conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace. This ſhewn in the general; Firſt, *From the neceſſity of humane Nature, which cannot live without them.* Secondly, *From ſundry examples of pious men, who had right to life whilſt they lived in them.*

THAT meaſure of life or death which Chriſt has indiſpenſably fixed for all his Servants, is not a *perfectly intire*, and *abſolutely unerring* obedience. No, it makes *allowances* for the *unconquerable frailties*, and *unavoidable infirmities* of our Natures. It conſiders that we are but men, and exacts no more of us than a humane ſervice. That integrity which, as we have ſeen, it requires of us, is an intire obedience only of our *free* works, and *voluntary* or *choſen* actions. For then we are *perfect* and *intire* in God's account,

when we have done all that was in our power, and have no wilful ſtain upon us; when we have no other blemiſh, than what the unwill'd weakneſs of our Nature, and the very frame and circumſtances of our Conſtitution have made neceſſary. And therefore every tranſgreſſion whatſoever, whether *with* our wills, or *without* and *beſide* them, doth not preſently blot us out of the Book of life, and put us out of a ſtate of Grace and Salvation. No, ſome defects there are which do not overthrow, but conſiſt with it.

To give a clear account of this, I will ſhew theſe *two* things.

1. In the *general*, that *ſome ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions* are *conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation*, and *diſpenſed* with by the *Goſpel-Covenant*; ſo that although a man dye before he has amended them, and is reformed from them, yet he ſhall not at the Day of Judgment be condemned for them.

2. More *particularly*, *what*, and of *what nature* thoſe conſiſtent ſlips and tranſgreſſions are.

1. I ſay in the *general*, that *ſome ſlips and tranſgreſſions are conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation; and are not eternally threatned, but graciouſly tolerated and diſpenſed with by the Covenant of the Goſpel.* And therefore if a man die in them, before he has perfectly amended them, he ſhall not be condemned for them.

Now, as for this, the abſolute *neceſſity* of *humane nature* makes it evident. For ſuch a ſtate of unerring obedience and impeccability cannot here be performed by any man, whether *Heathen*, *Jew*, or *Chriſtian*; and therefore it cannot be required of him. No man of any Religion whatſoever can do it; and ſo God cannot, he will not exact it.

For of this all men may be fully ſatisfied from that aſſurance of *Gods goodneſs*, which is common to all Religions

Religions in the World, that he never commands impoſſibilities, or enjoins men to do that which is not to be done. He doth not require a Beaſt to be as perfect as a man; or lay that load upon a man, which is fit only for the ſtrength of an Angel. For to do thus, were to act the part of a ſevere Taskmaſter, and a cruel impoſer; but by no means to uſe the Authority of a loving and a gracious Lord. It were indeed to reap where he has not ſown, and to call for that which he has never given; and to command and order, reward or puniſh; not to promote obedience, but only to ſhew power; not according to mens deſerts, but only according to his own will. For if he ſhould bind impoſſibilities upon us by a Law, and eſtabliſh it with penalties; he could not be thought to preſcribe a Rule of action, ſince no man can act after it; nor to fix a meaſure of Judgement, ſince it being in no mans choice to break or to perform, no man can juſtly be judged by it: but only to ſeek a palpable pretence of unjuſt force, and arbitrary cruelty. Becauſe it is all one to torment and puniſh a man without any Law, as to puniſh him for the breach of that, which it was never poſſible for him to perform. For there can be no fault, where there is no ability; and a *Tree* is as much in fault for not walking when it is bidden, or a *Stone* for not diſcourſing; as a man is for not doing that which it is above his power to do. So that whatſoever a man in ſuch caſe is puniſhed for, will fall at length upon God himſelf; becauſe whatſoever he ſuffers, it is not for that he *would* not, but for that he *could* not help it; which in very deed is to ſuffer puniſhment, for being no better, or abler, than God was pleaſed to make him.

Whatſoever therefore no man can [a] avoid, no man ſhall ever be puniſhed for. Becauſe God cannot be offended with infirmities of his own making, nor angry at his

[a] *Quis peccat in eo, quod nullo modo cavere poteſt?* Aug. de lib. Arbit. loc. 18.

own workmanſhip, ſince that were in reality and reaſon to be angry at himſelf.

And thus much, I ſay, *all the world* may be convinced of in this matter, from that common aſſurance which all men either have, or may have of *Gods Juſtice* and *Natural Goodneſs*.

But then as for us *Chriſtians*, we are aſſured that God cannot injoyn impoſſibilities, or make that an indiſpenſable condition of his Covenant which the beſt of us all is not able to come up to; becauſe ſuch dealing would not only contradict the *Goodneſs* and *Juſtice of his nature*, which is enough to make any honeſt *Jew* or *Heathen* to abhor the thoughts of it, but would moreover thwart and deſtroy all the ends of the Goſpel, and the declarations of Grace. For if the Covenant of the Goſpel, or of Grace it ſelf, ſhould exact that which no Chriſtian can perform, and damn them for what they cannot help; it were no Covenant of Grace and Mercy, nor any favour at all to men, ſeeing it would leave them juſt where it found them, and not put them into one *jot* the better caſe, than they were in before it came. Chriſt would never have called himſelf *the way*; if no man could walk in it; or *the* b *life*, if none were ever able to live by him. The *Angels* had never ſung c *joy to all people* at his birth, if that joy had been ſet ſo far above us, that the talleſt of us all could not reach up to it; nor have proclaimed upon his coming into the world, d *on earth peace, and good will towards men*; if yet, after all that he has done and ſuffered for us, we are ſtill left in ſuch a caſe, that what none of us all can help, ſhall put *God* and *Us* into a ſtate of *ill will* and *enmity*. How could he have been called a *Jeſus* or a e *Saviour*; if he proffered ſalvation upon ſuch ſtrict terms, as no man could ever hope to be ſaved by? or f *Grace* and *Truth* have been truly affirmed to come by him;

b John 14. 6.
c Luke 2. 10.
d Verſe 14.
e Mat. 1. 21.
f John 1. 17.

him; and the preaching of his Religion be called a *Goſpel* or g *glad-tidings*; if the conditions of it were ſo very hard, as that no man could perform them? To make ſuch offers of Grace, as none were able to accept of, had not been to relieve our neceſſities, but to deride them; and that which in the Apoſtles judgement is a moſt groſs *abſurdity*, would have been in reality a moſt certain truth; (*viz.*) that *all their preaching was vain*, and *our faith is vain alſo*, 1 Cor. 15. 14, 17. g εὐαγγέλιον.

As for us *Chriſtians* therefore, who are under the gracious Covenant and Goſpel of Chriſt, we are aſſured that nothing is under the pains of Hell and miſery required of us, which cannot be performed by us, not only from that *common natural knowledge*, which we, as well as others, have of Gods *Goodneſs* and *Juſtice*; but alſo from all thoſe particular Revelations which we enjoy, above other men, in the Goſpel of Grace. Impoſſibilities can be no condition of our happineſs, becauſe, as Gods nature cannot bear, ſo neither can Chriſts Goſpel conſiſt with it.

Nay, I add further, ſo far are all the Laws of Chriſt from being an *impoſſible* task, that to us *Chriſtians*, who are ſtrengthned by thoſe aſſiſtances which *Chriſt* affords, and his *Goſpel* promiſes, they are neither *grievous* nor *extream difficult*, but a burthen *fair* and *eaſie* to be born. *His Commandments*, ſaith S. *John*, *are not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. And our Lord himſelf, who beſt knew the meaſures, both of *our Natures*, and of his *own Grace*, declares expreſly that *his Yoke* of Precepts is *eaſie* or *h* gracious and favourable, *and his burthen light*: Upon which inducement he exhorts all men with the greater willingneſs to *take it upon them*, and ſubmit to it, *Mat.* 11. 30. h χρηστὸς.

This then all Religions in the world, and we Chriſtians above any, either are, or may be undoubtedly aſſured

assured of, that no man is indispensably bound to do, what no man can do; and that those things cannot be injoyn'd, which can never be performed.

But now to live wholly without sin, in an impeccable and unerring obedience; to go on exactly streight in Gods way without the least wandring, and to tread alwayes firm in the paths of righteousness without ever slipping: to walk so uprightly as never to fall, neither by security or rashness, inadvertency or weakness, surprize or weariness, is more than humane nature can do, and is a task, not for a Man, but an Angel.

And that some slips and transgressions of this nature are such as *no* man of what Religion soever, whether *Gentile*, *Jew*, or *Christian*, can avoid; is plain, because no meer man ever yet *did* avoid them.

It was an undeniable Argument of *Atticus* in S. *Jerome*, i *Give an instance of some man that did it; or else confess that no meer man yet ever could do it.* For since there is both an utter necessity, and a severe Commandment requiring it; it cannot be but that some of all mankind, when they had so much reason, and so infinite inducement, should have endeavoured to the utmost, and have done it, if the doing of it had been within the power of humane nature. So that if it be a failing inseparable from the practice of every man, we must conclude it to be unconquerable by the humane nature also.

i *Da exemplum qui absque peccato fuerit in perpetuum, aut confitere imbecillitatem tuam.* Jerom. lib. 1. Dial. adv. Pel. *paulò ab initio.*

But now as for this inability of performing in every instance, and transgressing at no time; it has been the comp'aint of *all persons*, in *all Religions*, throughout *all ages* of the world.

For as for the bravest men among the *Heathens*, we have *Seneca* their great Moralist confessing freely.

k *We*

k *We have all ſinned more or leſs*, ſayes he, even of his Countrey Laws. For *ſome have ſinned in great matters, ſome in little, ſome out of choice and deſign, ſome through conſtraint, or through the ill example and ſeduction of others. Some have been too eaſily driven from good purpoſes, and ſinned, though it were againſt their wills. Nay, we have not only tranſgreſſed thus far, but what augments our miſery, we ſhall continue ſtill to tranſgreſs ſo long as we have breath in our bodies. Yea, if there be any man who has ſo well cleanſed his ſoul, as that no temptation can win upon him; yet has he run through a long train of ſins before he attained to that pitch of innocence.* l *Let us perſwade our ſelves of this in the firſt place*, ſayes he again, *that we are all ſinners. For what man is he that dares ſay he has broken none even of his Countrey Laws? But granting that he had kept all them, yet how ſcanty and defective an innocence is that, to have done only all that Good which they oblige to? For how many things are required, and not performed, by the Divine Law of Piety, of Humanity, of Liberality, of Juſtice, of Fidelity? of all which, whether we keep or break them, the Laws of our Nation take no notice.*

k *Peccavimus omnes, alii gravia, alii leviora, alii ex deſtinato, alii fortè impulſi, aut aliena nequitia ablati: alii in bonis conſiliis parùm fortiter ſtetimus, & innocentiam invîti, ac renitentes perdidimus. Nec delinquimus tantum, ſed uſque ad extremum ævi delinquemus. Etiam ſiquis tam bene purgavit animum, ut nihil eum obturbare amplius poſſit, ac fallere; ad innocentiam tamen peccando pervenit.* Sen. de clem. lib. 1. cap. 6.

l *Hoc primum nobis ſuademus, neminem noſtrum eſſe ſine culpâ. Quis iſte eſt qui ſe profitetur omnibus legibus innocentem? Et ut hoc ita ſit, quam anguſta innocentia eſt ad legem bonum eſſe? quàm multa pietas, humanitas, liberalitas, fides, juſtitia exigunt? quæ omnia extra publicas tabulas ſunt.* Id. de Ira, lib. 2. cap. 27.

And as for the Jews, we find *David* the man after Gods own heart crying out, *Who can underſtand his errors? Cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults*, Pſal. 19. 12. And *Solomon*, who was the wiſeſt and moſt knowing man that ever was upon the earth, layes it down for an Aphoriſm of univerſal obſervation, that *there is not a juſt man upon earth* ſo perfect, as alwayes to *do good and never ſin*, Eccleſ. 7. 20.

Nay, even the *Diſciples of Chriſt* themſelves, who have

have the nobleſt encouragements, and the greateſt aſſiſtances for a moſt compleat and entire obedience, of any men whatſoever; could never yet attain to ſuch a ſtate, as to obey univerſally without ever ſlipping. The *Holy Fathers* in the *African Councils* felt this by themſelves, and were ſo deeply ſenſible of it from their own experience, and from what they heard and preſumed of others; that they condemned it as a *proud* error for any man to think or ſpeak otherwiſe. m *To ſay that our Nature is as perfect as ever* Adams *was, and that any man now may live, if he will, all his life long without ſin, and has the ſame free liberty that* Adam *had in Paradiſe never to do amiſs*; is an error *that ſtands condemned by the Holy Councils.* And what theſe good men thus ingenuouſly confeſſed, all others have conſtantly complained of; there being none among them who was ever able to live up ſo exactly to the Precepts of the Goſpel, as not to do againſt them in any inſtance. No, that was the ſole Prerogative of the man Chriſt Jeſus, who in that reſpect had no other man to whom he could be likened. For he was made like unto us in all other things indeed, ſave only in ſin, which we all had more or leſs, but *he wanted*, Heb. 2. 17. and Chap. 7 26.

m *Et Quoniam tales naſcantur nunc quoque qualis Ille fuit noſtri Generis pater ante reatum: Poſſe hominem ſine peccato decurrere vitam Si velit, ut potuit nullo delinquere primus Libertate ſua: nempe hæc damnata fateris Conciliis*——Proſper lib. de Ingrat. contra Pelag. cap. 9. *Ne quis ſibi quaſi innocens placeat, cum innocens nemo ſit, & ſe extollendo plus peccat; inſinuatur & docetur peccare ſe quotidie, dum quotidie pro peccatis jubetur orare.* Cyp. de Orat. Domin. in hanc petitionem ——— *Dimitte nobis Debita noſtra*, &c.

And ſince this ſtate of *unerring Obedience* is ſuch as in this life no man *can*, becauſe no meer man ever yet *did* attain unto; we may be ſure that God doth not indiſpenſably require it. But ſome infirmities the Goſpel muſt of neceſſity diſpenſe with, becauſe, according to the preſent circumſtances of Humane Nature, we cannot help all; ſome muſt be pardoned, ſince all cannot be eſcaped.

But

But beſides all that has been already ſaid to ſhew the conſiſtence of ſome failings with a ſtate of ſalvation, becauſe of the unavoidable weakneſs of Humane Nature which cannot perfectly get quit of them: we may add this further, which will evidence it beyond all exception, that the *beſt Saints* of God, and the unqueſtionable heirs of happineſs, have alwayes lived ſubject to them. Thoſe very men, who are moſt certainly gone to Heaven, went thither with ſome of theſe ſlips and infirmities about them. They could not plead an unerring obedience; but yet, notwithſtanding all their errors, they had right to all the Promiſes of the Goſpel. They died happily, although they could not live wholly without offence. So that ſome ſins do not in any wiſe deſtroy a *Saint*, or ſubvert the hopes and happineſs of a good man, but can and do conſiſt with them.

And in the proof of this the Scriptures are many, and plain. *Holy Job*, who maintained his own Integrity to be ſuch as God would accept and approve of more ſtoutly, it may be, than any man ever did; confeſſes notwithſtanding a number of ſins, for which, although God of his abundant Grace and Mercy *would* not, yet if he would, he *might* contend with him. *How ſhall man*, ſayes he, *be juſt with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him* ſo much as *one of a thouſand. If I juſtifie* my ſelf in the unerringneſs of my obedience, *my own mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay* before him that *I am perfect* and have ſinned in nothing, *it ſhould alſo*, by ſuch confeſſions as he would extort from me, *prove me perverſe*, Job 9. 2, 3, 20. And *David*, a man after Gods own heart, acknowledges freely that he is guilty, not only of ſeveral ſins which he remembers, but alſo of many more which he doth not know of: *Who can underſtand his errors? cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults*, Pſal. 19. 12. Nay, even *Paul* the *Apoſtle*,

who at that time was a most undoubted heir of Heaven, doth yet own freely that as *yet* he had *not attained to perfection, but only endeavoured after it*, Phil. 3. 12, 13. But although he were not so perfect as to obey without all error, and to offend in no instance; yet had he as much perfection as the Gospel exacts, and such as the best men on earth attain to. For at the fifteenth Verse, he calls upon *as many as be perfect* in such measure as the Gospel accepts of, *to be thus minded* as he was, *and forgetting those things* whereto they had already attained, *which were* now *behind*; *to press on* towards that higher perfection *which was* yet wanting in them and *before* them, as he told them he himself did, *vers.* 13.

And since men of this full growth and high pitch in goodness, could never yet get free of these unavoidable infirmities; it cannot be expected that others, who are endowed with a more imperfect Grace and a lower Virtue, should ever live entirely above them. No, alas! God himself declares plainly by the mouth of his inspired Servants, that no man yet ever did attain so far. *There is no man*, sayes *Solomon*, *that sins not*, 1 Kings 8. 46. He challenges any person, how good and holy soever, to say that he is wholly blameless, and has no stain at all upon him. *Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am wholly pure from my sin?* Prov. 20. 9. No man certainly, not the most nobly good and eminently virtuous themselves. For *there is not a just man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not*, Eccles. 7. 20. The blessed Saints who are now in Heaven, could never get perfectly free from sin till they got thither. For it is only in Heaven, *the New Jerusalem, where the spirits of just men are made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. But so long as we continue here on earth, let us aspire after that pitch of Righteousness never so much, yet, such is the inseparable infirmity of our nature, we shall still fall short

ſhort of it. Be favourable in cenſuring one anothers faults, ſayes S. *James*, becauſe every man will need that favour from others towards his own faults more or leſs; *for in many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 1, 2. whatever ſome may falſly pretend, yet in reality no man lives entirely innocent. For *if we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us*, 1 Joh. 1. 8. we are never able to ſhew this height of obedience, nor doth Chriſts Goſpel exact it of us. For even, there we are taught in our *daily* prayers to confeſs our **daily treſpaſſes*; and yet notwithſtanding that, we are allow'd, nay, commanded in the ſame breath to call God *our Father* ſtill, *Mat.* 6. 9, 12.

* *Ne quis ſibi quaſi innocens placeat, cum innocens nemo ſit, ex ſe extollendo plus pereat; inſtruitur & docetur peccare ſe quotidie, dum quotidie pro peccatis jubetur orare.* Cyp. de Orat. Domin. in hanc petitionem. p. 195.

As for *ſome ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions* therefore, we ſee plainly that they are conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation, and are not eternally threatned, but diſpenſed with by the Covenant of the Goſpel. For the *infirmity of our Nature is ſuch, that we never can*; and *Gods goodneſs is ſo great, that he never will require us to be entirely free from them. The very beſt men*, and *thoſe very Saints who are now in bliſs, have lived ſubject to them, and fallen under them; but yet they made no blot in their character, nor robbed them of Gods favour*, and *that life and pardon which is promiſed in the Goſpel.* And that we may be certain is conſiſtent, which, as we plainly ſee, not only *needs muſt*, but indeed *alwayes has* conſiſted with a ſtate of Mercy and Regeneration. For the terms of the Goſpel are the ſame to all times, and what they bear with in *one*, they do likewiſe in *another*. God is no *reſpecter of perſons*, nor can ever render *different* judgement to them, who have done the *ſame* things. So that as for ſome ſins, we are fully aſſured from the foregoing conſiderations that they are not eternally threatned, but diſpenſed with by the Covenant of the Goſpel; and that ſo long as we are free from others, if

we dye in them without amending them, we ſhall not at the laſt day be condemned for them.

Thus then in the *General* it appears, that ſome ſlips are conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace: God under the Goſpel-Covenant doth not puniſh them, but bear with them; ſo that although we die unreformed from them, we ſhall yet be ſaved notwithſtanding them.

But to clear up this buſineſs more fully, I ſhall proceed now to what I undertook in the *ſecond* place; namely, to ſhew *more particularly what*, and of *what Nature thoſe allowed ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions are*; whereof I ſhall diſcourſe in the *enſuing* Chapters.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nature of theſe conſiſtent ſlips more particularly.

The Contents.

Our unchoſen ſins are conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace, but our wilful and choſen ones deſtroy it. All things are made Good or Evil, a matter of reward or puniſhment, by a Law. Laws are given for the guidance and reward only of our voluntary and choſen actions. This proved, firſt from the clear reaſon of the thing. Where it is inferred from the Nature of Laws, which is to oblige; from that way that all Laws have of obliging, which is not by forcing, but perſwading men; from the dueneſs of rewards and puniſhments, commendations and reproofs; from the applauſe or accuſations of mens

own

own conſciences upon their obedience or tranſgreſſions. Secondly, From the expreſs declarations of Scripture.

IF any man ſhould ask which of all Chriſts Laws thoſe are, which he may *keep* or *break* at his own pleaſure, and yet go *unpuniſhed*; I muſt tell him, none at all. For there are no failings and tranſgreſſions in a mans life allowed of for this reaſon, becauſe diſobedience is warranted to ſome Laws, although it be not to others. No, in our whole Religion there is no one Law that is left ſo naked. For God has not given any Commandments with that indifference to them, as if he cared not what became of them, or were unconcern'd whether men kept or broke them; but he has eſtabliſhed them all under the ſame penalty, ſo that *he who breaks* any *one*, *is guilty*, as S. *James* ſayes, and obnoxious to the puniſhment *of all*, Jam. 2. 10. It is not therefore the tranſgreſſion of ſome Laws which ſhall be born with, but not of others; for that which gets an allowance for the breach of one, would procure a favourable ſentence for the like violation of all the reſt.

That then which makes the difference of *puniſhable* and *unpuniſhable* in mens failings, is not to be ſought for in *Chriſts Laws*, ſeeing the puniſhment of every one of them is the ſame; but in their *own actions*. For ſome ſins ſhall be born with, not for that they are againſt a Law whereto no penalty is annexed, there being none ſuch in all Chriſts Goſpel; but for that they are ſuch imperfect actions, as the puniſhing Law, which they are againſt, will not take hold of. Every Law of Chriſt threatens death, but theſe allowed offences are not of the number of thoſe actions which are threatned by it.

For we muſt take notice that thoſe works of ours whereon Chriſt's Laws lay reſtraint, and whereto they

as

as all other juſt Laws in the World, threaten puniſhment, are our *voluntary* and *choſen* actions. They bind us up in all thoſe performances which are placed in our own free power, and come from the choice of our own will; and they denounce woes to us if in them we go beyond thoſe bounds which they have ſet us. So that in all our free and choſen actions we muſt take care to do what the Law requires, and to keep back from what it forbids; and we are ſure to ſuffer if we neglect it. For it is among theſe actions of choice where the Law reigns, on which it layes Commands, and whereto it threatens puniſhment. If we chuſe and do what is commanded, then have we a right to the promiſed reward; and if we chuſe to do what is forbidden, then are we guilty, and obnoxious to the puniſhment denounced. But as for other actions which flow not from our own choice, of which ſort are all our pardonable and allow'd infirmities, they fall not under the *ſtrict* force of the Law, either in the guidance of its *Command*, or in the ſting of its *puniſhment*; ſo that at the laſt Day it will not be judged to have been either broken, or kept by them.

That I may fully clear up this, whereupon ſo much of that which I ſhall ſay under this *Head* depends, I will ſhew concerning it theſe *two* things:

1. That *all things whatſoever, which are either good or evil, and a fit matter of reward or puniſhment, are made ſuch by a Law.*

2. That all our *actions are not governed by God's Laws, ſo as to be ſtrictly and directly either enjoyned or prohibited, puniſhed or rewarded by them; but only thoſe among them which are voluntary and choſen.*

1. I ſay, *All things whatſoever, which are either good or evil, rewardable or puniſhable, are made ſo by ſome Law.* For *good* and *evil*, *vertue* and *vice*, *obedience* and *ſin*, which

which are only ſo many different Names for the ſame thing, have all relation to a *Commandment*. *Vertue* and *obedience* is the *performance*, as *vice* and *ſin* is the *tranſgreſſion* of it. *Where there is no Law*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *there is no tranſgreſſion*, Rom. 4. 15. And *no mans ſins*, as ſaith another Apoſtle, but *he that tranſgreſſeth the Law*; *for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law*, 1 *John* 3. 4. And as *Law* is the meaſure of *ſin* and *Duty*, ſo is it likewiſe of *reward* and *puniſhment*. For God never afflicts and torments the Children of men out of the *inclination* of his *Nature*, but only out of the *neceſſity* of *Government*. He is the Ruler of the World, and the Lord of men; and therefore he muſt maintain his own Laws, and puniſh the evil Doers. But no man is ever puniſhed without an offence, and he muſt do evil before he ſuffer it. He undergoes nothing, but that which is his own choice; for he choſe rather to incurr the penalty, than to perform the Commandment. He feels no more than the Law denounced, for God the Judge executes nothing but what the Law threatens; he puniſhes according to it, but not without it. The Law doth alwayes make a penalty due to an Offender, before he either *can*, or *doth* exact it.

Thus are all things, which are either *good* or *evil*, *rewardable* or *puniſhable*, *made ſuch by a Law*. But then,

2. As for *our actions*, *all of them are not governed by God's Law*, *ſo as to be ſtrictly either enjoined or prohibited*, *puniſhed or rewarded by them*, *but only thoſe among them which are voluntary and choſen*. And this being a Point whereof I ſhall make ſo much uſe in all that follows, I will ſpend the more time in clearing of it up, as I hope, beyond all queſtion, by ſhewing the truth of it,

1. From *the clear reaſon of the thing it ſelf*.

2. From *the plain declarations of the Scripture concerning it*.

1. I ſay,

1. I ſay, That *only our voluntary and choſen actions are under the reſtraint of Laws*, and *either enjoyned or prohibited, puniſhed or rewarded by them; is plain from the great and convincing reaſon of the thing it ſelf.* For let us conſider,

Firſt, The very *nature of a Law*, and we ſhall find that in all thoſe actions whereon it is impoſed, it ſuppoſes them who exert them to have a *power of choice*, and a free liberty of making them, either a piece of ſervice to it, or a tranſgreſſion of it. For all Law is a *Bond* or a *Tye*, which layes reſtraint upon us, and induces *Obligation*. So that in all thoſe actions whereupon the reſtraint is laid, we are neceſſarily ſuppoſed to be free before it comes. For it is an utter abſurdity to bind any thing by a Law, which is before neceſſitated by its very Nature. Who would ever be ſo vain and fooliſh, as to give a Law to a *Stone*, that it ſhould not ſpeak? or to a *Tree*, that it ſhould not walk? or to the *Fire*, that it ſhould not chill and freeze him? There can be no place for, nor need of an Obligation, where there is no choice and liberty. For it is only where things have a power to act on *both* ſides, that there is room for a Law to oblige, and tye them up to *one*. And for this reaſon it is, that among all that variety of Creatures which inhabit in this lower World, *men* alone are capable of Laws, becauſe no Creature beſides is endowed with freedom of will and liberty of choice, which is to be bound up and reſtrained by them.

Nay, even in men themſelves, thoſe actions and tempers which are not ſubject to their own *choice*, nor under the power of their own *wills*, are no fit matter of a Law, nor fall under the force of a Commandment. For who can ever be ſo unreaſonable and void of all ſenſe, as to command a man that he ſhould not be born *ſuch* or *poor*, *baſe* or *noble*; that he ſhould not be *ſick* and

and *weak*, *hungry* and *thirſty*, *ſleepy* or *weary*: No, ſince none of theſe inſtances is in his own choice, or under the free diſpoſal of his own will, in none of them is he capable of an Obligation.

Seeing then that it is of the nature of every Law, to be given as a Bond and Obligation to us in ſuch Actions, to which otherwiſe our will is free, and able either to chuſe or refuſe them; it is plain that Laws are intended for a reſtraint upon us only in our voluntary and choſen actions. For there are none elſe wherein we are free, and therefore none beſides, wherein they ſhould intend to bind us.

Secondly, That only our voluntary and choſen actions are under the reſtraint and puniſhment of Laws, is plain from *that way*, *which all Laws have of obliging men.* The Law is no *Law* further than it *obligeth*; and all its *obligation* is only upon our *choſen actions.* For all the force which it can poſſibly have upon us to bind us to the performance of any thing, is only ſo far as it can make us will and chuſe it. And therefore as for all unchoſen actions, they are not within the reach of Law, becauſe they are not ſubject to the force of Obligation.

Now that this is the only way which all Laws have of obliging us to a thing, *viz. their engaging us to will and chuſe it*, ſo that the force of obligation can fall upon no action which is *unchoſen*, is evident. For that *whereto* they would oblige us, is ſuch actions as they injoyn or forbid; and that *power* or *faculty in us* which they would oblige to it, is *our wills.* For our wills are the Diſpoſers of our actions, ſeeing we work at our own choice, and do what we will and like our ſelves. But now as for all the obligation which any thing can poſſibly lay upon our wills, it is not by way of *neceſſitating*, *compulſive force*, but only of *moving* and *exci-*

ting Arguments. Becauſe from the very conſtitution of our nature, our will cannot be forced by any Bond, but only moved of it ſelf to chuſe that, which it is intended to be bound to; ſo that in its nature it is capable of being obliged to nothing which is unchoſen. For the will of man is not a Subject capable of natural force, or bodily violence; a man may as ſoon hope to graſp a ſhadow, or to lay violent hands upon an Angel, as to engage it that way. No, it is no Body, nor bodily faculty; ſo that it is not ſubject to any *phyſical force*, to be bound hand and foot by a Law, as a Thief is by a Chain: but the only poſſible way whereby to work upon it, is to win it by *Arguments.* It muſt determine its own choice, ſince other things cannot determine it; and therefore ſuch things muſt be ſuggeſted and propoſed to it as can perſwade, but nothing that can force and compel it.

For this indeed is all the hold, that any Law can have upon the will of man; *it naturally wills and chuſes what is good, and hates and refuſes what is evil.* And this gives a Law ſome power over it, in binding it to chuſe what the Lawgiver has a mind it ſhould, if he firſt make it *deſirable.* He may win it in its own way, *viz. If he make obedience to become its intereſt*, and ſhew it plainly that it can be no gainer by diſobedience, but that it is by far the better for it to *chuſe* what he enjoins, than to *refuſe* it. For the wills own proper motion, and natural way of working carries it on to deſire and chuſe that which appears to be good, and to fly and refuſe that which is known to be evil. And therefore when the things propoſed in the Law have a moſt deſirable good annexed to the performance, and a moſt hateful evil joined with the tranſgreſſion of them; this is an engagement and tye upon it indeed to chuſe the Duty for the goodneſs ſake, and to avoid the ſin for the evil

evil that accompanies it. It binds it ſo far, as its own deſires and inclinations can bind it; it tyes it up as much as can be by its own hopes and fears; it lays obedience in the way to that, which it loves and longs after; ſo that if it would come at that, there is no other means, but this muſt be the way to it.

And this is the way whereby all Laws oblige us. For they are backed with ſuch rewards and puniſhments, as make it every mans advantage to do what they enjoyn him. The evil of diſobedience is always infinitely greater than the evil of obeying; ſo that if the wills of men chuſe in their own way, and will be wrought upon by their own motive, they muſt determine themſelves to that whereto the Laws would bind them. And this ſecuring of that which is commanded, by making it far worſe for any man to break than to fulfil it, is abſolutely neceſſary and naturally inſeparable from all Laws. For a frightful penalty is either expreſly mentioned, or, if not, it is always implyed. If the puniſhment is ſet down, then they who tranſgreſs muſt ſuffer what the Law threatens; but if it be not, they muſt undergo what the Legiſlator pleaſes. So that *puniſhment* can never be pulled away from *Law*, but if there be a Command given which makes no penalty due, nor creates a right of inflicting any; it has only the *name* of a Law or Commandment, but that is all, for it contradicts its *nature*. A *requeſt* or *entreaty* it may be, a *counſel* or *advice*; but a *Law* or *Command* it never is.

And ſeeing all obligation to action, is only ſuch a motive and convincing reaſon to our wills, as makes them chuſe to act, rather than to omit what the Law intends to oblige them to; 'tis plain that where there is no room for choice, there is none likewiſe for Law and Obligation. For we cannot be *moved* to *chuſe* thoſe a-

ctions which are *unchoſen*, and therefore we cannot be *obliged* to them. But all obligation being only a convincing motive to our choice, we cannot be capable of being obliged by Laws in any other, than our *voluntary* and *choſen* actions.

And thus it appears both from the *nature of Law*, and from the *force of obligation*, both which are *antecedently* neceſſary to make up the nature of *ſin* or *obedience*, that all the *reſtraint* which is laid, and all the *puniſhments* which are inflicted by Laws, are only upon our *voluntary* and *choſen* actions.

And this will yet further appear, if we conſider ſome other things which are *conſequent* to ſin or obedience, and enſue upon the working or commiſſion of them; as are,

Thirdly, *Rewards* and *puniſhments*, *commendation* and *reproof*. Every *Lawgiver* commends and rewards thoſe who keep his Laws, and puniſhes and reproves all ſuch as break and tranſgreſs them. But now all this can have place only upon their * voluntary actions which were at their own choice, and in their own liberty, either to have exerted, or omitted. For no actions can be imputed to a man, either for him or againſt him, further than they depended on him. Becauſe there is no thanks at all due to him, for doing that which he could not avoid; nor any charge at all capable to be brought againſt him, for failing to do what he could not do. Who would ever be ſo abſurd, as to reprove and puniſh a man for being *low of Stature*, or *weak of Body*, for being *born of mean perſons*, or to a *ſmall Fortune*? Theſe, and all other things of like nature, which a man could never help, may be his *misfortune*, but not his *fault*; and whatſoever he ſuffers upon the account of them, may be, and often is, his *calamity*, but by no means his *puniſhment*. No man can juſtly be charged with

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν ἄξιος μοιβῆς ἢ ἐπαίνου ἄνθρωπος ἐκ ὧν ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ ἐλόμενος τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο γενόμενος· οὐδ' εἰ κακὸς ὑπῆρχεν, δικαίως κολάσεως ἐλύγχανεν, ἐκ ὧν ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ τοιοῦτος ὤν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν δυνάμενος εἶναι ἕτερον παρ' ὃ ἐγένετο. Juſt. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 81.

with that which was never ſubject to his own choice; but if any imputation is laid upon *him* for its ſake, it reſts not *there*, but falls all upon *that Cauſe*, whoſe free pleaſure it was ſo to order him. Agreeably whereunto the *Wiſe man* tells us, That *whoſoever mocketh the poor, reproacheth* not him, who cannot help his poverty, but *his Maker*, whoſe pleaſure it was to diſpoſe of him in that condition, *Prov.* 17. 5. And as a man can bear no *juſt blame* for that, which it never was in his power to hinder; ſo neither can he undergo any *juſt puniſhment*. *Barbarous cruelty* indeed he may fall under, which would have taken place without a Law as well as with it; but *legal* and *juſt penalties* he never can.

And ſeeing no action is *puniſhable* but what is *choſen*, it is plain that the Laws of God impoſe reſtraint, and threaten puniſhment, only to our *voluntary* actions.

Which will ſtill further appear from another effect of every *ſinful* and *puniſhable* action; namely this,

Fourthly, That it is ſuch, for which our own *Conſciences will blame and condemn us*, and which we ſhall lament in *repentance* and *remorſe*. One great part even of *Hell torments* is this *remorſe* and *worm of Conſcience*. For there is no action for which we ſhall there be puniſhed, but, when it is too late, we ſhall endleſly repent of it. *Their worm* there, as our Saviour ſaith, *dyeth not*, Mark 9. 44. But now it is an utter abſurdity, and downright madneſs for any man to be angry at himſelf for that which he could never help, and to repent that ever he committed that which it was not in his power to hinder. For doth it ever repent any man that he is not *tall of Stature*, that he was not born as *ſtrong as Samſon*, or made *immortal as an Angel*? Was any man ever touched with remorſe, becauſe he breathes, and ſleeps, and thirſts, and hungers? No man ever is, or ever can be angry at himſelf, but when he

he ſees that he has been wanting to himſelf; when he has done that which it was in his own choice to have done otherwiſe. For all remorſe is for a willing offence: a man chuſes it when he commits it, and therefore, when afterwards he ſees his errour, he condemns himſelf for it.

And ſince a mans own Conſcience condemns him for all thoſe things for which God's Law will puniſh him, and no man can condemn himſelf for doing any thing but what he choſe to do: neither his own Conſcience can condemn, nor the Law puniſh him for any, but his voluntary and choſen actions.

And thus upon all theſe reaſons we ſee, That it is only our voluntary and choſen actions whereupon God's Laws lay reſtraint, and wherefore, at the laſt Day, he will inflict puniſhment; ſo that no ſin is damning which is not choſen. This is a very clear and well-grounded truth. For the *nature of Law* which makes good and evil, of *obligation* which enforceth it, of *rewards* and *puniſhments from God*, of *acquieſcence* and *remorſe from our own Conſcience*, which enſue upon it; all theſe evidently evince and prove it. For not any one of them is concerned about any actions, but thoſe which proceed from choice, nor have to do with any works but what are wilful. So that every action whereto there is *Law* and *obligation*, *exhortation* and *admonition*, *reward* or *puniſhment*, *commendation* or *reproof*, *acquieſcence* or *remorſe*, as there are for all thoſe which the Laws of God will ſentence; every ſuch action, I ſay, is an effect of our own will, or a *voluntary choſen* action.

Thus is it clear from the *reaſon* of the *thing it ſelf*, that *all our actions are not governed by God's Laws*, ſo as to be ſtrictly either enjoined or prohibited, puniſhed or rewarded by them; but only *thoſe among them which are voluntary and choſen*.

And

And this will appear yet further,

2. From the *plain declarations of the Scripture concerning it.*

That whereby God *a* looks upon his Laws to be either *broken* or *kept*, is the *b choice* and *conſent of the heart. My Son, give me thy heart*, ſaith Wiſdom, *Prov.* 23.26. So long as that is pure, we can have no damning ſtain upon us, for *out of the heart*, as our Saviour aſſures us, all *theſe things muſt proceed* which God will judge to *defile a man*, Matth. 15. 18, 19, 20. The *luſts of our Fleſh* muſt gain the *conſent of our wills* before they become *deadly ſins*, and *conſummate tranſgreſſions*. *Luſt*, ſays St. *James*, *when* (having won over the liking and approbation of our wills, and a half conſent to its impure embraces) *it has conceived, bringeth forth* the Embryo or rude Draught (anſwerable to conception, which is but a half production) of *ſin: and* this Embryo of *ſin, when* (by being brought on to a full choice and conſent, or, what is more, to action and practice) *it is finiſhed, bringeth forth* its genuine Off-ſpring *Death*, Jam. 1. 15. The conſent of our hearts then muſt compleat our ſin, and our own * wills muſt of neceſſity concurr to work our ruine. For we muſt wilfully reject or caſt off the Law which would keep us in, and go beyond it when we behold it, before our tranſgreſſion will have got up to the pitch of a damnable pollution, or a mortal crime. Nay, I add further, till we are come thus far as wilfully to reject the Law, and knowingly to tranſgreſs it; we ſhall not be interpreted to commit that which the Goſpel calls † ſin, and which it ſtrictly forbids and ſeverely threatens under that name. For if we will take St. *John*'s word, this is his explication of it. *Sin*, ſays he, is *the tranſgreſſion*, as we render it, but

a 1 Sam. 16. 7.

b *Non eſt cui recte imputetur peccatum, niſi volenti*, Aug. de lib. Arbit. l. 3. c. 17.

Εἰ μὴ προαιρέσει ἐλευθέρα πρὸς τὸ φεύγειν τὰ ἀίδια, καὶ αἱρεῖσθαι τὰ καλὰ, δύναμιν ἔχει τὸ ἀνθρώπειον γένος, ἀναίτιόν ἐστι τῶν ὅπως δύπολε πραττομένων. Juſt. Mart. Ap. 2. p. 80.

* Ὅτι αὐτεξούσιον τὸ τε τῶν ἀγγέλων γένος καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς, δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ὧν ἂν πλημμελήσωσι τὴν τιμωρίαν ἐν αἰωνίῳ πυρὶ κομίσονται. Juſtin Martyr, Apol. 1.

† ἁμαρτία, ἐκστις ἀδικία. ἀδικία δὲ ἐκστις κακία. ἔστιν οὖν ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἐνὸν ἐκούσιον. Clem. Alexand. Strom. 2. p. 284. ed. Lug.

but more fully, and more agreeably to the Original it ſhould be, the † *renouncing* or *caſting off the Law*, 1 *John* 3. 4.

He calls it not παραβασία, which is the proper word to denote a *going beſide the Law*, or a *tranſgreſſion* of it; but ἀνομία, which imports a *being without Law*, or a *renouncing* of it. As ἄνομοι καὶ ἀνυπότακτοι are the *lawleſs* and *diſobedient*. 1. Tim. 1. 9.

And thus we ſee that from *plain Scripture*, as well as from *clear reaſon*, it manifeſtly appears, that all our actions are not governed, nor will hereafter be judged by Gods Laws; but ſuch only among them as are voluntary and choſen.

And therefore although there be no *Law* of Chriſt which gives men *leave to ſin* without *fear of puniſhment*; yet ſome actions there may be againſt *many*, or *moſt* of Chriſt's Laws, which ſhall not be judged to be *puniſhable tranſgreſſions* of them; as are all our *involuntary* and *unchoſen* actions. And of this ſort are all thoſe conſiſtent ſlips, which, as I ſhewed before, not only *are*, but needs *muſt* be born with, and allowed by the Covenant of the Goſpel. For it is our involuntary failings which are our unavoidable ones, becauſe we have no power to avoid where we have no liberty to will and chuſe; and ſince they are ſuch as we cannot help, they are ſuch likewiſe as God pities, and ſuch as the Goſpel doth not puniſh, but graciouſly pardon and diſpenſe with.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the nature and danger of voluntary ſins.

The CONTENTS.

The nature of a wilfull and a deliberate ſin. Why it is called a deſpiſing of Gods Law, a ſinning preſumptuouſly, and with a high hand. Wilfull ſins of two ſorts, (viz.) *ſome choſen directly and expreſly, others only indirectly and by interpretation. Of direct and interpretative volition. Things choſen in the latter way juſtly imputable. Of the voluntary cauſes of inconſideration in ſins of commiſſion, which are drunkenneſs, an indulged paſſion, or a habit of ſin. Of the power of theſe to make men inconſiderate. The cauſe of inconſideration in ſins of omiſſion,* (viz.) *Neglect of the means of acquiring vertue. Of the voluntarineſs of all theſe cauſes. Of the voluntarineſs of drunkenneſs; when it may be looked upon as involuntary. Of the voluntarineſs of an indulged paſſion; mens great errour lies in indulging the beginnings of ſin. Of the voluntarineſs and crying guilt of a habit of ſin. Of the voluntarineſs of mens neglect of the means of virtue. No wilfull ſin is conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace, but all are damning. A diſtinct account of the effect of wifull ſins,* (viz.) *when they only deſtroy our acceptance for the preſent, and when moreover they greatly wound and endanger that habitual vertue which is the foundation of it, and which ſhould again reſtore us to it for the time to come. Theſe laſt are particularly taken notice of in the accounts of God.*

HAving thus clearly shown in the *General*, that all the *dispensation*, and *allowance for our consistent slips under the Gospel*, comes not from the *nakedness* and *want of penalty in any of Christs Laws*, but only from the *imperfection* and *involuntariness of our own actions*: I will descend now to consider *particularly what those consistent slips and transgressions are.*

In the management whereof, I shall shew these *two* things:

First, That our *voluntary and chosen sins and transgressions of any of Christs Laws, are not consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation, but are deadly and damnable.*

Secondly, That our *involuntary and unchosen slips are consistent, and such as Christs Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but graciously bear and dispense with.*

First, I say, *No voluntary sin, or chosen transgression of any of Christs Laws is consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation, but is deadly and damning.*

To make this out, it will be very requisite to shew,

1. *What sinfull actions are voluntary and chosen:* And,

2. *That none of them is consistent with a state of Grace, but deadly and damning.*

1. *What sins and transgressions are voluntary and chosen.*

Then we commit a *wilfull chosen sin*, when we *see and consider of the sinfulness of any action* which we are tempted to, *and after that choose to act and perform it.* Every *chosen* sin is a sin against *Knowledge*, for the will is a blind faculty, and can choose nothing till our mind proposeth it. All choice is an act of * *Reason* and *Understanding*,

* Τῶν ἑκουσίων ἐκεῖνο μόνον προαιρεῖσθαι καλεῖται, ὁ περιβαλλόμενοι βουλῇ. ἡ γὰρ προαίρεσις μετὰ λόγου, καὶ διανοίας. Andron. Rhod. Paraph. in Eth. Arist. lib. 3. cap. 4.

derſtanding, a **preferring* one thing before another; and we muſt *view* and *conſider both*, before we can *prefer either*.

* Τὸ προαιρετὸν δοκεῖ σημαίνειν τὸ πρὸ ἑτέρου αἱρετόν. Ibid.

That which ſuggeſts the ſinfulneſs of any action to us, and ſets the evil of it before us when we are about to chooſe it, is our *Conſcience*. For God has placed this Monitor of every mans Duty in every mans breaſt, to tell him upon every occaſion what he requires from him. And till ſuch time as men have debauched their underſtandings into a groſs miſtake of their Duty, ſo as to call *Evil Good*, and *Good Evil*; and God in his juſt anger has given them up to a *reprobate mind*, or a mind c void of judgment; their own conſciences will keep them in mind of Gods Laws, and not ſuffer them to tranſgreſs without reproof. So that every *wilfull ſin*, is a *ſin againſt a mans own mind or conſcience*.

c Ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, Rom. 1. 28.

Nay further, ſo long as mens hearts are ſoft, and their conſciences are tender, and before ſuch time as they are wholly enſlaved to their appetites, and quite hardened in ſin; their conſciences, eſpecially in ſome great and *frightfull* inſtances, will not only *ſuggeſt* and *repreſent* their Duty, but *argue* alſo, and debate againſt their luſts for the practice and performance of it. And then men are not won at the firſt offer, nor conſent to fulfill the ſin upon the firſt aſſault of the temptation; but are drawn in after a long deliberation and debate, and diſpute the matter with themſelves before they ſubmit to it. For when mens conſciences do not nakedly ſuggeſt, but moreover plead the cauſe, and urge the obſervance of their duty; there are arguments on both ſides to render the choice at firſt ſomewhat doubtfull. The Law of God promiſes an *infinite reward* to the action of obedience, and threatens an *endleſs puniſhment* if we diſobey; both which are *future*, and to be expected in the next world. And the temptation indu-

cing us to ſin, preſents us with a fair ſhew of *ſenſitive pleaſure*, *profit*, or *honour* if we practiſe, and threatens us with all the *contrary evils* if we neglect it: both which it ſets before us as things *preſent*, to be felt and enjoy'd by us even now whilſt we are here in this world. Now theſe are great motives on both ſides, each of them bidding fair for our conſent. Our *minds* or *conſciences* ſuggeſt the *firſt*, and our *fleſhly appetites* and *carnal reaſon* repreſent the *latter*; and for a good while theſe two advocates ſolicite the cauſe on both ſides, and diſtract and divide our wills between them. So that when at laſt the temptation doth overcome, and the Law of Luſt in the members prevails over the Law of God in the mind; yet is that after a ſtrife and a war, after a tedious toyle and much contention. And theſe wilfull ſins, becauſe we underwent a great *conflict* in our own minds about them, and paſt through a long *deliberation*, in an alternate ſucceſſion of deſires and averſations, hopes and fears, imperfect choices and refuſals, e're the conſent of our wills was gain'd over to the commiſſion of them, are call'd *deliberate* ſins.

Every *wilfull choſen* ſin then is a ſin againſt *knowledge* and againſt *conſcience*, when our own heart rebukes and checks us at the time of ſinning, telling us that God hath forbidden that which we are about to do, notwithſtanding which we preſume to do it. And if it happen to be in an inſtance that is *greatly criminal*, and *frightfull* unto *Conſcience*, which therefore puts us upon *demurs*, and creates *diſpute* and *arguing*; then is it not only a *known*, but a *deliberate* ſin alſo.

Nay, where we have *time*, and there is a ſufficient ſpace to conſider in between the opportunity and the action; if we know that the action is ſinfull, and are not in ignorance about it, by having either never heard of it, or quite forgot it; we ſin wilfully whether our conſcience

conſcience check us for it, and we conſider of it or no. For whereſoever we *can conſider* we *can chooſe*, there being motives on *both* ſides ſufficient to determine our choice on *either*. And as for all thoſe ſins which we know, whenſoever we have *time*, we can think and conſider of them. For all thought is free, and if we have leiſure, we may employ it according to our own liking. We cannot think, 'tis true, of many things at once, but we can conſider of any one, and employ our minds upon it *when*, and *how long* we pleaſe. So that in all ſuch leiſurely tranſgreſſions, if we acted inconſiderately, our inconſideration was our own fault, and entred only becauſe we ſuffered it, and had a mind to it.

In all ſuch actions therefore as we know are ſinfull, every tranſgreſſion with *time* and *leiſure* is voluntary and choſen. For either we ſaw and conſidered it before we ventured on it, or we might have ſeen it if we would. Our thoughts indeed are our own, ſo that even at ſuch times as we have leiſure to conſider, we may ſtill, if we pleaſe, tranſgreſs without all conſideration. But if we do, that is not our miſhap, but our fault, and we muſt anſwer for it. For where God has given us both *Power*, and *Time*, wherein to ſee and conſider; he moſt juſtly expects, and will certainly exact at our hands an account of what is done, as of a known and conſiderate action. So that not only our conſiderate and *deliberate* tranſgreſſions, but ſuch others likewiſe as are *unconſidered*, ſhall be judged *wilfull* ſins, if they are acted *leiſurely*, and are in ſuch inſtances as we *know are ſinfull*.

Theſe ſins of *time* and *leiſure*, or *knowledge*, and of *deliberation*, are our *voluntary wilfull ſins*. And as for them, they are all of a heinous guilt, and a crying nature. Every commiſſion of them is a *deſpiſing of Gods*

Law.

Law. For when we ſin wilfully, both our duty and our ſin being ſet before us, and both being compared and thought of by us, we *deſpiſe* and *reject* obedience to the Law, and willingly and adviſedly, whilſt we conſider both, prefer the obedience of our ſin before it. Upon which account our ſinning wilfully is called a *deſpiſing of the Law*, Hebr. 10. 28. And foraſmuch as ſuch *deſpiſing of the Law*, (which is nothing leſs than the will of Almighty God, who is moſt extreamly offended by it, and can moſt ſeverely puniſh it) is an act of the greateſt *boldneſs* and *preſumption*: therefore are our wilfull and choſen ſins ſtiled, in another word, d *preſumptuous ſins*, Pſal. 19. 13. And ſince ſuch preſuming with open eyes to deſpiſe Gods Law, is a *profeſt rejecting* of his *Law* and *Authority*, an *open caſting* off his *yoke*, and *rebelling* againſt his *Soveraignty*; doing *willingly* and *adviſedly* what *he forbids*, and ſetting up our *own will* in oppoſition to *his*, which is the higheſt inſtance of *pride* and *inſolence*, and *oppoſing God*: therefore are our wilful ſins ſaid to be acted through *rebellious pride*, and with a * *high hand*, Numb. 15. 30, 31.

d Deut. 17. 12. *Will do preſumptuouſly*, is explained by *will not hearken.*

* ἐν χειρὶ ὑπερηφανίας.

But now as for theſe ſins, which, being thus conſidered and deliberate, are voluntary and choſen; they are not all either *conſidered* or *deliberated* of, *willed* or *choſen* in the ſame way. For even among our wilfull ſins we muſt obſerve this difference.

Firſt, Some of them are *choſen expreſly* and *directly.*

Secondly, Others are choſen only *indirectly* and by *interpretation.*

1. *Some ſins are choſen expreſly and directly.* And ſuch are all thoſe ſinfull actions, whereto the conſideration and thoughts of our minds are particularly directed, and which we eye and view before we chooſe and act

act them. They are ſuch ſins whereat we pauſe and deliberate, doubt and demur; when we have a conflict and diſpute in our own minds whether we ſhould commit, or keep off from them. And ſuch direct choice and expreſs volition happens when men ſin with ſome tenderneſs, and ſenſe of conſcience. They cannot chooſe the ſin as ſoon as it is offered, but they undergo a ſucceſſion of fears and deſires. For the *temptation* ſolicites them to work the ſin, and their *conſcience*, being awakened by Gods Law, would deter them from it; ſo that they have a particular and expreſs conſideration of *both* ſides, before they act *either*. As for this way of ſinning therefore, by *expreſs choice* and *direct volition*, it is incident ordinarily, not to all ſinners whatſoever, but only to thoſe of a *middle rate*, whoſe conſciences, being not quite hardened as yet, make them tranſgreſs with *reluctance* and *remorſe*.

But beſides theſe, there are,

2. Other ſinfull actions which are not choſen *directly* and *expreſly*, but only *indirectly* and by *interpretation*.

By an *indirect* and *interpretative* choice, I mean an expreſs choice of ſuch a *ſtate of things*, as makes ſome ſinfull actions after that to be no longer a matter of free choice, but almoſt neceſſary and unavoidable. For ſome things are in our power at *firſt*, either to do, or omit them; but by ſome free actions of our own we can, if we will, put that power out of our own hands, ſo as afterwards we cannot, if we would, keep off from them. Thus a *ſervant*, for inſtance, who is *ſtrong* and *healthy*, can, if he pleaſe, perform his maſters will, and do what he requires of him. But if he chooſe either to *maim his body*, or to *impair his health*; he has parted with his own ability, and his omiſſion of the things enjoyned him after that is no longer a matter of *choice*, but

but of *neceſſity*. A *wealthy man* can eaſily, if he will, give *every man his own*, and honeſtly diſcharge thoſe debts, wherein he may ſtand ingaged to other men: But if he chooſe to *waſte his eſtate*, and to *throw away his riches*; he is no longer able to do what he ſhould, but detains the goods of other men thenceforward, not becauſe he *will* not, but for that he *cannot* help it. Now theſe omiſſions of the *lame ſick ſervant*, and this *diſhoneſty of the impoveriſhed man*, in this neceſſitous ſtate of things, whereinto they have thrown themſelves, are no matter of *particular* and *expreſs choice*, becauſe, as the caſe ſtands, it is not in their power to refuſe them. But yet they were choſen by them *indirectly* and in the *general*, when they choſe to put themſelves into this *neceſſitous ſtate*, wherein, being once placed, they ſhould not have the power thenceforward to avoid them. So that *indirectly* and *implicitely* they have choſen to do that, which *particularly* and *directly* it is not at their choice to avoid. And becauſe that which they do now under this neceſſity of their own making, is *interpreted* to them, and charged upon them by virtue of their former choice, as if now in every particular, they did expreſly chooſe it: therefore do I ſay it is choſen by *Interpretation*; (*i. e.*) it is *imputed to them*, and *may be exacted of them, as if they had choſen it expreſly*.

This then is an *indirect* and *interpretative* choice, even in actions which in the *particulars* are *neceſſary*, (viz.) *when that was deliberated of and choſen, which made them ſo*. All our actions in a neceſſitous ſtate are indirectly and interpretatively voluntary and choſen, when the neceſſity it ſelf is of our own chooſing. In the particulars, 'tis true, we are not free to refuſe them, but the reaſon why we are not, is, becauſe we our ſelves chuſe to be ſo. For although our preſent actions are *neceſſary*, yet once it was in our power to have kept them *free*: and

and that which cauſes us now to act indeliberately and without conſideration, was it ſelf once freely deliberated of and choſen. So that all thoſe actions, which are now neceſſary in the *particulars*, were, as the *Schools* ſpeak, *voluntary in the cauſe*; which is an *indirect choice*, and *interpretative volition*.

And as for thoſe actions which are choſen only *indirectly* and *implicitely*, (viz.) *in the free choice of that cauſe which made them afterwards to be all neceſſary*; they may very fairly be *imputed* to us, and *interpreted* to be our own. For in all reaſon the natural and immediate effects of a mans own free and deliberate choice may be charged upon him, and if he chuſes his neceſſity, it is fit that he ſhould anſwer for it, and bear the puniſhment of thoſe ſins, which he commits under it. What is a matter of any mans choice, may be an article of his accuſation, and a matter of his puniſhment alſo. But now as for this *neceſſity of ſinning*, it is a *neceſſity of mens own chuſing*. For they wilfully threw themſelves into it in chuſing the cauſe of it; and ſo may very juſtly be made to anſwer for all that which they commit under it. All the effects of their preſent neceſſity, if they are traced up, will terminate upon their own will; for they hang upon that file of actions, which had beginning from their own choice; and being thus choſen by them, they may juſtly be charged upon them.

As for ſuch effects indeed as are ſo *remote*, that a mans underſtanding, in the honeſt and ſincere uſe of it, cannot ſee them; although he do chuſe the cauſe, yet neither *God* nor *men* will look upon him to have choſen them. For there can be no choice where there is no knowledge, becauſe a man muſt ſee a thing before he will and chuſe it. But when effects lye *near*, and obvious to any ordinary capacity, if it do but uſe an honeſt diligence, as moſt mens neceſſity of ſinning doth

to those free actions which produce it; there it is only mens *sloth*, and *negligence* if they do not discern it: and if they chuse blindfold, when, if they would open their eyes, they might see, it is all one in God's account as if they did see it. For it is against all reason in the world, that the sinful neglects of men should take away the rights of God. He has given them faculties wherewith to see things before they chuse them, and he requires that they should. And if they will not use them, that is their own fault; but what he requires of them he will still exact, and punish them for what is done, as for a chosen action.

So that as for those sins which men have chosen in their *next* and *discernable Cause*, although they are not free to chuse or refuse them in the *Particulars* themselves, they are a part of their account at the last Judgement. What is chosen *indirectly* and by *interpretation*, is looked on as their own, and, if it be evil, will be imputed to them for their condemnation.

But now several of mens sins are of this last sort. For as we saw of some particular actions, that they are chosen in the *Particulars directly* and *expresly*: so are there likewise several others, which in the Particulars cannot be refused, but were chosen in the *general*, in the free choice of that *Cause* which has made them all afterwards necessary, so that they are *voluntary* only *indirectly*, and *chosen by interpretation*. For there is nothing so common in the World, as for men by their free choice of some sins to bring themselves into a necessity of others: they freely will and chuse some, which necessarily cause and effect more.

Now those things which may bring men into this necessity, are *such*, and so *many*, as make them *inconsiderate* and *hasty*. For therefore it is that in the Particulars we cannot expresly chuse or refuse several sins, because

cauſe we cannot ſtay particularly and expreſly to conſider of them. We have brought our ſelves to ſuch a paſs, that they ſlip from us without reaſoning and enquiring about them. For either our underſtanding is diverted that it *cannot*, or ſo well acquainted with them that it *need not* look upon them to obſerve and conſider them. And ſince we do not particularly conſider of them when they come, we cannot expreſly will and chuſe them: but foraſmuch as we choſe the cauſe of this inconſideration, we are ſaid to chuſe them indirectly, and by interpretation.

And as for the wilful and choſen Cauſes of ſuch inconſideration, I ſhall diſcourſe of them under theſe *two* ſorts, *viz.* as cauſing ſuch inconſideration in ſins, either,

1. Of *commiſſion*, or *doing what is forbidden.*

2. Of *omiſſion*, or *neglecting to do what is commanded.*

1. For thoſe cauſes of inconſideration in our ſins of *commiſſion*, which make us venture on them without all doubt or diſquiſition, they are theſe:

Firſt, *Drunkenneſs.*

Secondly, *Some indulged paſſion.*

Thirdly, *Habit or cuſtom of ſinning.*

For all theſe, when once we have conſented to them, take away either *wholly*, or in *great* meaſure, all further freedom, and make us will and chuſe what is evil indeliberately, and without conſideration.

Firſt, As for *Drunkenneſs*; we find daily in thoſe perſons who are ſubject to it, that it ſo diſorders and unſettles all the intellectual powers, that they have ſcarce any uſe of them at all. For their memory fails, and their judgement forſakes them. They have no thoughts, for that preſent time, of good or evil, of expedient or inexpedient. Their *reaſon* is overwhelmed and laid quite

asleep, and there is nothing that is awake and active in them, but their *bodily lusts* and *sensual passions*, which then hurry them on to any thing that falls in their way without the least opposition. So that they are wholly governed by their *appetites*, and, for that time, *unbridled passions* of *lust*, or *cruelty*, or *envy*, or *revenge*. They *blab* out that, which in their right wits they would *conceal*, and do what in a *sober mode* they would *condemn*. And so little is there of that reason and understanding in all their speeches and behaviour, which appears in them when the drunken fit is over, that any man may plainly see, how, for that present, it is removed from them. So that they act rashly and irrationally, more like *brute Beasts* than *men*, committing *rapes*, or *robberies*, or *bloodshed*, or any other mad frolicks and sinful extravagancies, without any deliberation or consideration at all. And,

Secondly, As for an *indulged passion*, we daily find, that when it is permitted to *grow high*, it has the same effect in making a man act inconsiderately, as *Wine* it self has. For a man may be *drunk* and *infatuated* with a *violent anger*, an *impetuous lust*, an *overpowering fear*, as well as with *wine*. It shall make him quite forget all Rules of decency and Vertue, and attend no more to them at that time, than if he had never known them. Of *anger* it is affirmed to a *Proverb*, that it is a *short fit of madness*. And the Case is the same in other passions, when they are suffered to go on to amazing and stupefying degrees. How many things are acted in the heat of *lust*, of *fear*, of *anger*, *&c.* which the men in their sober wits condemn so perfectly, that they would account themselves to be very much injured, if any man should say that they might be insnared into them, and fall under them? Of so great power are mens passions in clouding, nay, for a time, quite overwhelming their reason

f *Ira furor brevis est.*

reaſon and underſtanding. For ſuch is the condition of the *reaſonable ſoul*, that during its being here united to the *body*, it is ſubject to all its *alterations*, and liable, even in its moſt *proper* and *ſpiritual operations* of *reaſon* and *knowledge*, to be either *improved*, or *hindred*, or *quite taken away* by thoſe *changes* which befal it. In a *ſound* and *undiſtemper'd body*, it is *free* and *active*; but if the bodily Spirits, which are thoſe great inſtruments that it makes uſe of, are *ruffled* and *diſordered*; if they are either *confuſed* and *overcharged* by *ſtrong drink* or a *ſtrong paſſion*, *blended* and *diſplaced* by a *phrenſie*, *blaſted* by an *apoplexy*, or otherwiſe *mixed* and *diſordered*, *quenched* or *oppreſſed* by any other violent Diſeaſe: all uſe of *reaſon* and *conſideration* is ſtrangely *hindred*, if not for a while perfectly *eclipſed*. And this all men are ſo ſenſible of, that every one is apt to plead this in his own behalf, for thoſe faults which he commits in the height of paſſion; and others are as ready to admit of it. For their great excuſe is, That their paſſion made them almoſt mad, and ſpurr'd them on to act they knew not what, without all ſober thought and conſideration.

Thirdly, As for the *habit* or *cuſtom of chuſing ſinful actions*; it brings our wills to ſuch an acquaintance with them, and to ſuch an unſtudied forwardneſs in embracing of them, that when an opportunity is offered for them, we cannot refrain from them if we would, or ſtand to deliberate whether we ſhould chuſe them or no. For *cuſtom*, as we daily ſee, in all ſorts of actions, begets ſuch a *promptneſs* and *eaſineſs* in performing thoſe things which we are accuſtomed to, that we readily act them upon the next occaſion without ſtaying to think and conſider of them. *Uſe*, as was obſerved above, is a *ſecond Nature*; and what we have been wont to do by long practice, we do as *eaſily*, as *quickly*, and as *indeliberately*, as we do thoſe things which flow from the

the neceſſity of our very Nature it ſelf. And as it is in all our other actions, ſo it is likewiſe in our works of ſin and diſobedience. By a long acquaintance with them and practice of them, we learn at laſt to chuſe them whenſoever we meet with them, without all thought and examination. For all the little doubts and exceptions of our *minds* againſt them, all tormenting fears and checks of Conſcience have been ſo often ſilenced, that now they are heard no more to make any delay in our embracing of them. And our *wills* have been ſo accuſtomed to ſtrike in with them, and to chuſe the ſinful action upon every return of the temptation, that now they do not need to pauſe, but act off-hand, and ſin without enquiry. And our *bodily powers* are ſo naturally diſpoſed to ſpring out into the commiſſion of them upon occaſion, that they hardly ſtay for a Command, but are as quick and haſty in the diſpatch, as our wills were in their indeliberate chuſing of them. So that our willing of them after a long uſe, is not a matter of arguing and diſcourſe, of weighing and conſidering; but a ſudden, inconſiderate motion. It is rather turned into an act of *nature* than of *choice*, and has more in it of indeliberate neceſſity, than of conſiderate liberty. And as ſuch the Scripture is wont to repreſent it. For when ſin is once grown into a *confirmed habit*, we are told that it is not ſo truly an *inviting temptation*, as a *binding Law*, Rom. 7. 25. It doth not then ſo truly *perſwade*, as *rule* and *command* us. For we are *led Captives by it*, ver. 23. and *ſold under it*, ver. 14. We ſubmit to it out of neceſſity, and not out of choice; becauſe we do not chuſe where we cannot refuſe, and here we muſt be under it, and cannot help it. For it is now become our very nature, and it is almoſt as much out of our power to alter it, as it is for a thing to caſt off what is moſt natural to it. *Can the*

Æthiopian

Æthiopian Blackamore *change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots?* When they can do that, then, ſaith *Jeremy*, *may you alſo do good, who are accuſtomed to do evil*, Jer. 13.23. If men are ſo pleaſed, they may chuſe to ſin themſelves out of their liberty, till they can no longer chuſe whether they ſhall ſin any more or no. A *compleat habit*, and a *perfect cuſtom*, ſhall make them ſin beyond all *liberty*, becauſe they will ſin without all deliberation; and then they are got up to that pitch whereof S. *Peter* ſpeaks, *Of them who cannot ceaſe from ſin*, 2 Pet. 2. 14.

In ſins of *commiſſion* then, or *doing thoſe things which are forbidden*, the cauſes of indeliberateneſs and inconſideration, are moſt uſually theſe *three*, viz. *A drunken fit*, a *high paſſion*, or a *confirmed habit*.

And then,

2. As for the other Branch of *ſins*, *viz.* thoſe of *oniſſion*, or *neglecting to do what we are commanded*; Beſides theſe *three* already mentioned, which have their evil influence upon ſins of that kind alſo, there is *one great* and *particular* Cauſe which takes away our liberty of choice in them, and that is a *neglect of thoſe means, which are neceſſary to the performance of the omitted Duty*. For as it is in all our other actions, ſo is it alſo in thoſe of obedience, they hang in a *chain of dependance*, and are *helped* on or *hindred* by ſeveral others, which, further than they influence them, are not *religious* themſelves, nor make up any *part* of *obedience*. There is a Religion of the *means*, as well as of the *end*; and ſome actions are *helps* and *preparatives* to a *religious Duty*, but otherwiſe they are no *Duty* in *themſelves*. Thus the not *ſtaying to look upon a woman*, or to gaze upon her beauty, is one means whereto our Saviour directs a man, that he may be preſerved from *coveting* and *luſting after her*, Matth. 5. 28. So *faſting* is a furtherance to *prayer* and *repentance*, and ſeveral other inſtances of obedience.

bedience. And the Caſe is the ſame in ſeveral other things. For *meekneſs*, and *patience*, and *contentedneſs*, and *forgiveneſs*, and every other Vertue, has ſome *particular helps* and *furtherances*, ſome things that promote it and diſpoſe us for it, and others that obſtruct and hinder it.

Now as there is this order in the things themſelves, ſo muſt there be likewiſe in our endeavours after them. We muſt take them as they lye, and uſe the *means* that we may attain the *Vertue*. For *meekneſs*, *humility*, *contentedneſs*, and the like, are not ſo perfectly under the power of our wills, as that they can be exerted through their *bare Decree* and peremptory Commandment. But if we would attain them, beſides this imperiouſneſs of Command, we muſt further uſe all thoſe *means* and *helps*, which fit and prepare for them. In *habits of the mind* men are ſufficiently convinced of this. For it is not every one that wills *prudence*, who is a *wiſe*; or that wills *learning*, who is preſently a *learned* man. But he who would be ſo, beſides his *willing* and *deſiring* it, muſt *read*, and *ſtudy*, and *obſerve*, and *ſeek inſtruction*: he muſt uſe all thoſe means which lye in the way to knowledge, and thoſe inſtruments which prepare for it, and are neceſſary to introduce it, before he can attain to it. And the Caſe is the ſame in all *vertuous* and *moral habits*, which are ſeated in the *will* likewiſe. For we muſt uſe thoſe inſtruments which facilitate and diſpoſe us for the Vertue, before the Vertue will become our own; and we muſt put in practice all the means and preſervatives againſt any Vice, before we can in reaſon hope to conquer and avoid it. If we would not be *proud* or *peeviſh*, we muſt abſtain from all the *inlets* to *pride* and *peeviſhneſs*. And if we would be *meek* and *humble*, we muſt not *neglect* the helps and inſtruments promoting *meekneſs* and *humility*. For the helps

helps and the vertue muſt both go together; ſo that if we neglect the one, we ſhall certainly miſs of the other alſo. When once we have neglected the means of any Vertue therefore, we have parted with our power of obtaining it. We have thrown away our liberty, in loſing of our opportunity; ſo that now our miſſing of it is not ſo much a matter of choice, as of neceſſity. We omit it and cannot help it, becauſe we neglected to uſe thoſe means, whereby we ſhould have attain'd it. And in ſins of *omiſſion* this is the great and ſpecial Cauſe which puts them without our power; for we neglect the means of doing what we ſhould, and after that, it is not ſo truly our free choice, as our neceſſity that we omit it.

Theſe then are the cauſes of our want of choice in the particular inſtances of ſins, whether of *commiſſion*, or of *omiſſion*. We do not chuſe that *evil which we commit* for want of *conſiderateneſs* and *deliberation*, the freedom whereof is taken away from us by *drunkenneſs*, *paſſionateneſs*, and a *habit* or *cuſtom* of committing it. And we do not chuſe the *omiſsion of ſome Duty which we neglect*, for want of *power*, whereof we have deprived our ſelves through the *neglect of thoſe means*, which are neceſſary to the performance of it. So that both in *doing what is forbidden*, and in *neglecting what is commanded* upon theſe Cauſes, we do what for that preſent we cannot help. For we do not chuſe, becauſe we cannot refuſe it; and therefore it is not ſo much through choice, as through neceſſity that we are involved in the tranſgreſſion.

But although theſe ſins are thus undeliberated in *themſelves*, and thus unchoſen in their *own Particulars*; yet ſhall we be puniſh'd for them as ſurely, as if we had expreſly choſen them, becauſe they were all choſen in their *Cauſes*. For we freely and deliberately choſe that

which made them neceſſary, and that is enough to make us anſwer for all thoſe things, which we acted under that neceſſity.

For as for *drunkenneſs*, which is one of thoſe Cauſes that deprives us of all liberty, by taking away all conſiderateneſs and deliberation; 'tis plain that it either is, or may be deliberately conſidered of and choſen. For drunkenneſs is a ſin which requires time in the very acting of it. It is not entred on in a moment, or diſpatched before a man can have time to bethink himſelf; for he may pauſe and deliberate at every Glaſs, and is free all along to chuſe the ſin before the Wine inflames him. It has nothing in it of *ſuddenneſs* or *ſurprize*, and therefore nothing of indeliberation. Becauſe where a man has time, he may deliberate if he will; and if he will not, that is his own fault, and he muſt anſwer for it, and is puniſhable in all reaſon as if he did.

'Tis true indeed, to a man who has never *tried*, and is *ignorant of the force of Wine*, or of any other intoxicating Liquor, and of its ſudden way of diſcompoſing his Spirits and dethroning his Reaſon: Drunkenneſs at the *firſt* time may be a ſin of ſurprize, and an indeliberate action. Becauſe he ſuſpects not that a free Draught, which he takes down now, ſhould a while hence work ſo great an alteration: he is unacquainted yet with the ſtrength of it, and knows not that it will have ſuch effects upon him. And ſo long as he doth not ſee that intoxication is at the end of his preſent draught, he cannot be ſaid to deliberate of, or conſiderately to chuſe it. It happens to him beſides his expectation, and is not an effect of choice, but of ſurprize. And thus it was with *righteous Noah*, Gen. 9. 20, 21. And this being *unforeſeen* and indeliberate, what a man commits under it is the more excuſable, as was the *inceſt of Lot*, Gen. 19. 33. But after a man has felt by himſelf,

or

or learned from others what the power of Wine, or other intoxicating Drink is, it is generally after his own fault, and his own choice if he be overcome by it. For either he doth, or may ſee the ill effects of it; and if for all that he chuſe to go on in it, it is at his own peril: becauſe if he chuſes drunkenneſs, he ſhall be interpreted to chuſe all thoſe ſinful effects whereto he may ſee, if he will, that Drunkenneſs expoſes men. So that as for this Cauſe of indeliberate ſins, *viz. drunkenneſs*; it we ſee is in it ſelf deliberated of, and freely choſen.

And as for the *ſecond* cauſe of indeliberate ſins, *viz. ſome indulged paſſions, which grow to ſuch a height, as to* drive us on furiouſly into the fulfilling of them without ſuffering us to deliberate about them; they alſo are a Cauſe of our own free choice and deliberation. For it is in our power at *firſt*, either to give way to a beginning paſſion, or to repreſs it. We can check it as we pleaſe whilſt it is low, becauſe then its ſtrength is very weak, and our own conſideration and command is the greateſt. But if we ſlacken the Reins, and give it liberty; then it knows no bounds, but proves too ſtrong for us, and hurries us on whether we will or no. For in every ſtep which the paſſion makes, it doth ſtill the more diſturb our Spirits, and thereby diſable all the power of our reaſon and conſideration. So that proportionably as it encreaſes, our conſideration, and, together with that, our choice and liberty is leſſened and impaired. But at the firſt, whilſt it is young and of ſmall ſtrength, it is in the power of our own wills either to indulge it, or to ſtop and repreſs it. And therefore if it get ground upon us, it is by our own liking, becauſe either we expreſly chuſe to ſtay upon it, and thereby to feed and foment it, or wilfully neglect to uſe that power which we have over it, in curbing and

ſtraining it. And when once we have of our own choice permitted it to go too far, then is it got without our reach, and goes on further without asking our leave, whether we will or no.

And herein lyes the great error of men, *viz. in that they freely and deliberately conſent to the firſt beginnings of ſin, and by their own voluntary yielding too far, they make all that follows to be plainly neceſſary.* For the *luſtful* man deliberately and wilfully permits his wanton fancy to ſport it ſelf with impure thoughts, and laſcivious imaginations; til by degrees his paſſion gathers ſtrength, and his luſts grow ſo high, that all his powers of reaſon and Religion are ſcattered and clouded, and rendred wholly unable to ſubdue it. The *angry* man freely and deliberately *hearkens* to *exaſperating ſuggeſtions*, and *cheriſheth diſcontents* ſo long, till at laſt his paſſion is got beyond his reach, and flies out into all the unconſidered inſtances of *rage* and *fury*. And the Caſe is the ſame in *fear*, in *envy*, in *love*, and *hatred*, and other paſſions. Men firſt conſent to the *firſt ſteps* and *beginnings* of a ſinful luſt, and when they have deliberately yielded to it a little way, they begin by *degrees* to be *forced* and *driven* by it. For all progreſs in a vicious luſt, is like a motion down-hill; men may begin it where they pleaſe, but, if once they are entred, they cannot ſtop where they pleaſe. All vice ſtands upon a *g* Precipice, and therefore although we may ſtay our ſelves at the firſt ſetting out, yet we cannot in the middle. But although, when once we have gone too far, it be not at our own choice whether or no we ſhall go further; yet was it in the free power of our own wills not to have gone ſo far as we did. The entring ſo far into the paſſion, was an effect of our own will and free deliberation; and if this make that neceſſary which is done afterwards, that is a neceſſity of our own chuſing. So that

g *Omne in præcipiti vitium ſtat.* Juv. Sat. 1.

that whatſoever our after actions are, this cauſe of them is a matter of our own will, and freely choſen.

And then as for the *third* cauſe of indeliberate ſins, (*viz.*) a *cuſtom and habit of ſinning*; that is plainly a matter of our own free chuſing. For it is frequent acts that make a habit, and they are all free, and at our own diſpoſal. Becauſe the neceſſity ariſes from the habit, and doth not go before it; ſo that all thoſe actions which preceded and were the cauſes of it, were free and undetermined. Wherefore as for that indeliberateneſs in ſinning, which ariſeth from an *habit* and *cuſtom of ſin*; it doth not in any wiſe *leſſen* or *excuſe* a ſinful action. Nay, inſtead of that, it *aggravates* and *augments* it. For this is ſin improved up to the height, and become, not ſo much a matter of *choice*, as of *nature*. And to ſin thus, is to ſin as the *Devils* themſelves do, from a natural Spring and Principle, without the help of thinking and diſputing. Upon which accounts, as it is the moſt advanced ſtate of ſin, ſo muſt it be of ſuffering likewiſe; this ſtate of *reigning*, and *prevailing habits of ſin*, being, as S. *Paul* calls it, *a body of death*, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24. All which aggravation both of ſin, and ſuffering it has, becauſe it is an aggregate and collected body of many wilful and preſumptuous ſins. For before men come ſo far, they have deliberately choſen, and wilfully neglected to refrain from all thoſe precedent actions, which have advanced the ſtrength of ſin to that pitch, and have made it to be, not ſo much a *temptation* or a *refuſable motive*, as a *binding* h *Law*, and *neceſſitating nature*. So that although thoſe ſinful actions which flow from us after that we are come to a habit of ſin, are indeliberate and unchoſen: Yet as for our evil habit it ſelf, which is the cauſe of them, it was produced by a combination of wilful ſins, and was in all the antecedent degrees a matter of choice and deliberation.

h Rom. 7. 23.

And

And lastly, as for the cause of our *involuntary omissions*, (viz.) *our neglect of those means, which are necessary to our performance of those things which are commanded*; this is clearly our own fault, and comes to pass only because we chuse it and have a mind to it. For the reason why we neglect the means, is, because we will not use them. We have time enough wherein to deliberate and consider of them, and thereby to chuse and practise them; but we will not use it to that purpose. The means and helps to *chastity*, to *meekness*, to *contentedness*, and other virtues, are all before us, and we have power to put them in practice if we think fitting. For it is just the same for that matter with the endowments of our *wills*, as with those of our *minds* and *bodies*. We can see and consider of the means of getting *knowledge* and *learning in our minds*; and of those receits and rules, which are to promote the *health of our bodies*; and upon such consideration we not only *can*, but ordinarily *do* make *choice* of them, and put them in *practice*. And although it happen much otherwise with those wise directions, and helpful rules that are given for the *attainment* of *virtue*, which are read ordinarily only to be *known*, but not to be *practised*; yet is it in the choice of our own wills to make use of *them* if we please, as well as of the *other*. The neglect of them is a wilful neglect, for therefore we do not use them, because we chuse to omit them. So that although when once we neglect the means, it be not at our choice after that to attain the virtue; yet that neglect it self was. The omissions in themselves, it may be, are not chosen, because they cannot be refused: but that negligence, which is the cause of their being so, is plainly an effect of our own choice and deliberation.

Thus then it plainly appears, that our sinful *commissions* upon *drunkenness*, *passionateness*, and *custom* of sinning;

ning; and our ſinful *omiſſions* upon our *neglect of the means* and *inſtruments of virtue*, all which are *indeliberate* and *unchoſen* in *themſelves*, were yet deliberately choſen in their *cauſes*. So that all our neceſſity in them, is a neceſſity of our own making, ſeeing it was at our own choice whether ever we ſhould have come under it; although, when once we are ſubject to it, it be no longer at our liberty whether or no we ſhall be acted by it.

And ſince all theſe ſins which are thus indeliberate in themſelves, were yet ſo freely choſen and deliberated in their cauſes, they are all imputable to us, and fit to be charged upon us. They were choſen *indirectly* and *interpretatively*, in the choice of that *cauſe* which made them all afterwards to be *almoſt*, if not *wholly neceſſary*. For either we did deliberate, or which is all one, we had time enough to have deliberated as we ought, before we choſe our own neceſſity. So that theſe ſinful actions which are *unchoſen* and *unconſidered* in *themſelves*, are yet imputable to us, and fit to be charged upon us as our own, becauſe we choſe them by an *indirect* and *interpretative volition*.

As therefore there are ſome ſins which are expreſly will'd in the particulars by an expreſs choice and deliberation; ſo likewiſe are there ſeveral others, which are expreſly and deliberately willed only in their cauſe, but in their own particulars are not choſen otherwiſe, than indirectly and by interpretation.

And *both* theſe together take up the compaſs of our *wilful* and *choſen ſins*. For either we expreſly think, and deliberately conſider of the ſinful action when we commit it; or we expreſly and deliberately thought upon that cauſe, when we choſe it, which makes us now to ſin without thinking and deliberation.

And by all this it appears now at length, how conſi-

derateneſs

derateneſs and deliberation is implyed in every wilful ſin. For the ſinful action is ſeen and conſidered, (or it is our faults if it be not, ſince we had both time and powers for ſuch conſideration) either in *it ſelf*, or in its *cauſe*; and being it is thus a matter of our conſideration, it is likewiſe a matter of our choice, and a wilful action.

And thus having ſhewn what ſinful actions are voluntary and choſen; I proceed now to ſhew,

2. That *none of them is conſiſtent with a ſtate of grace, but deadly and damning.*

As for our *wilful ſins*, they are all, as we have ſeen, of a moſt *heinous nature*; being indeed nothing leſs than a *contempt of Gods Authority*, a *ſinning preſumptuouſly*, and *with a high hand*. They are a plain diſavowing of Gods will, and renouncing of his Soveraignty; they are acted in a way of defiance, and are not the unavoidable ſlips of an honeſt and well meaning ſervant, but the high affronts of an open *i* rebel. So that no *favourite* or *child of God* can ever be guilty of them, or he muſt ceaſe to continue ſuch if he be. Becauſe they interrupt all *favour* and *friendſhip*, and put God and him into a ſtate of hoſtility and defiance; ſeeing they are nothing leſs than a *renouncing of his Authority*, at leaſt in that inſtance, and a *caſting off his Law*. And this *lawleſsneſs*, or rejecting of the Law, is that very word whereby S. *John* deſcribes *ſin*. For *ſin*, ſayes he, *is the tranſgreſſion*, as we render it, but more fully it ſhould be the k *renouncing of the Law*, 1 John 3. 4. In which ſenſe of ſin, for a *wilful* and *rebellious* one, he tells us, that *whoſoever abides in God ſins not*, verſ. 6. being indeed no longer a *child of God* if he do, but of the *Devil*, verſ. 8.

They deprive us of all the *benefits of Chriſts ſacrifice* ſo long as we continue in them, and of all the *bleſſings* purchaſed

i *Elatio contemnentis in minimis mandatis culpam facit non minimam, & convertit in crimen gravis rebellionis nævum ſatis levem ſimplicis tranſgreſſionis.* Bernard. de Præcept. & Diſpenſ. c. 14. p. op. 931.

k Ἀνομία not παραβασις.

purchaſed for us by his *death*. This was their effect under the *Law of Moſes*, and it is ſo much rather under the *Goſpel of Chriſt*. For the ſentence which that Law pronounced upon all *preſumptuous* and *wilful offenders*, was *death without mercy*. *The ſoul that doth ought preſumptuouſly, the ſame*, by his contemptuous ſin, *reproacheth the Lord, and that ſoul ſhall be cut off from among his people*, Numb. 15. 30. If ever it could be proved againſt him, by that diſpenſation there was no hope for him. For he that *deſpiſed*, or contemptuouſly *k* tranſgreſſed *Moſes*'s *Law, died without mercy*, ſaith the Apoſtle, being convicted *under* the teſtimony of *two or three witneſſes*, Hebr. 10. 28. For even thoſe very ſins for which under the Law God had appointed an attonement, were no longer to be attoned for, than they were committed *involuntarily and through ignorance*. In the fourth Chapter of *Leviticus* we are *l* told, that as for thoſe ſins which are committed *againſt any of thoſe Commandments which concerned things not to be done*; if they were acted m *involuntarily and unwittingly*, they ſhould be allowed the benefit of an *expiation*, and the ſacrifices for that purpoſe are there preſcribed. But if they were acted *wilfully* and *adviſedly*, then had they no right to the expiation there promiſed, nor would any ſacrifices be accepted for them, but that puniſhment muſt unadvoidably be undergone, which in the Law was threatned to them. For, to name no more, this we are plainly told of two inſtances; (*viz.*) the *contemptuous making of perfume*, and *eating of blood*, after both had been forbidden. Whoſoever ſhall contemptuouſly *make any perfume like to that* (which was commanded to be made, *verſ.* 35.) *to ſmell thereto*; *that ſoul ſhall* not be expiated by ſacrifice, but *cut off from his people*, Exod. 30. 38. And *whatſoever man there be that eateth any manner of blood*, (viz. knowingly and wil-

k in the *Syriack* verſion, according to *Tremelius*'s tranſlation, it is *tranſgreſſus eſt, ſcil. aſpernanter.*

l Verſ. 2.

m Ἀκουσίως in verſion. 70.

fully, the ignorant and involuntary tranſgreſſions of this and the like prohibitions being attoneable, *Lev.* 4.) *I will even ſet my face againſt that ſoul, and will cut him off from among his people*, Levit. 17. 10.

Thus ſevere was the ſentence, and thus unavoidable was the penalty of all wilfull ſins under the Law of *Moſes*. And by how much the miniſtration of *Chriſt* is nobler than the miniſtration of *Moſes* was, by ſo much ſhall the puniſhment of all wilfull and contemptuous ſins againſt the Law of Chriſt, be more ſevere, than it was for thoſe againſt the Law of *Moſes*. And this is the Apoſtles own argument. *For if that word* of the Law threatning death, which was *ſpoken* unto *Moſes* on Mount *Sinai by* the mediation only of *Angels*, *was ſtedfaſt, and every tranſgreſſion* of it *received the juſt recompence* of that death which it threatned, ſuch perſons dying without mercy: *How ſhall we* Chriſtians hope to *eſcape* it, *if we* wilfully *neglect* and contemn thoſe Laws, which are publiſhed to us by *ſo great* a means of *Salvation* as the Goſpel is; *which was* at *firſt ſpoken* to us, not by Angels, but *by the Lord* Jeſus Chriſt *himſelf*, who is far above all Angels, being indeed the Son of God himſelf, *Hebr.* 2. 2, 3. Surely, as the Apoſtle argues in another place, *if he who deſpiſed* even *Moſe*'s *Law*, *died without mercy* for that contempt; we ought to think with our ſelves, not of how much leſs, but *of how much ſorer puniſhment he ſhall be judged worthy*, *who*, by wilfull ſinning and deſpiſing of his Laws, doth in a manner *tread under foot*, not *Moſes*, but *the Son of God himſelf*, Hebr. 10. 28, 29. His puniſhment indeed ſhall be moſt dreadfull, being nothing leſs than all thoſe woes which are denounced in the Goſpel. For *the Law*, with all its threats and penalties, *is* particularly *made* and deſigned, as St *Paul* ſayes, *for the lawleſs* (which is that very *n* word whereby St. *John* deſcribes ſin) *and* the

n Ἄνομος.

the wilfully *diſobedient*, who, when they ſee the Law, will not be *o ſubject* to it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9.

o Ανυπότακτοι.

As for our *voluntary* and *choſen* ſins then, whether they are choſen *directly*, or only by *interpretation*, we ſee plainly that they are *not conſiſtent* with a *ſtate of Grace* and *Salvation*. For they ſubject us to all that death which the Law threatens, and deprive us of all that life and happineſs which it propoſes to us, which, beſide all the evidence which the Scripture gives us of it, is plainly demonſtrable from the very reaſon of the thing it ſelf. For certainly if Chriſts Laws will condemn us for any actions whatſoever, it muſt be for thoſe, which, being voluntary, may juſtly be charged upon us, and looked upon to be our own. It muſt be our willing what ſin enjoyns, which can make us Servants of it, and ſubject us to that death, which God has appointed for its wages: So that both from *Reaſon* and *Scripture* it evidently appears, that every *wilfull ſin* is certainly a *deadly one*, and puts the ſinner out of a ſtate of Gods favour and ſalvation.

'Tis true indeed that every wilfull ſin doth not rob us of Gods favour in ſuch meaſure, as to *incapacitate us for regaining of it ever after*. But its effect is this, before ſuch time as we have repented of it and amended it, we are under all the threatnings of the Law, and ſubject, if we die in that inſtant, to that death which is ordained for the wages of it. We are out of Gods favour for the *preſent*, and the *ſtate of friendſhip* betwixt him and us is interrupted; and till we *repent*, we ſhall not be *reſtored* again to it. As for the *ſtate of acceptance* and *ſalvation*, it is *broken*, and *deſtroyed* for the preſent; for we are put under the puniſhing part of Gods Government, and are made ſubject to his vengeance by being ſinners againſt his Law. But as for the *foundation of that acceptance*, (viz.) that *habit of virtue and obedience*,

which, in the wilfull action, we ſinn'd againſt: it is not *quite deſtroyed*, but only *wounded* and *impaired* in us. For *habits* are neither won nor loſt by *one* action, but by *many*. It is frequency and repetition that muſt either produce, or deſtroy them. If therefore a good man is careleſs in ſome inſtance, and loſes his innocence, and is vanquiſhed into a wilfull ſin; yet is not the *habitual inclination* of his ſoul towards that inſtance of obedience, againſt which he offended, *quite extinguiſhed* in him, but only ſomewhat *weakned* and *abated*. Thus, for inſtance, a *ſober* man, if he conſent once to be *drunk*, doth not thereby wholly loſe his *ſober inclination*. But when the temptation is paſt, his habitual temper, which was foil'd and over-born, revives again, and he abhors his ſin, and confirms his reſolution, and ſo is ready at the next return of the temptation to waſh off the ſtain of his former offence, by an oppoſite inſtance of new obedience. And the caſe is the ſame in the wilfull commiſſions of any other ſin. For although any one wilfull act be a damnable tranſgreſſion, and put the ſinner into a damnable condition for the preſent; yet doth it not deſtroy, but only wound and weaken that habitual temper of virtue, which, if God ſpare him life, may enable him with eaſe to act otherwiſe for the time to come.

Although indeed *ſome* wilfull ſins have ſuch a *complication of evil* in them, and are carried on againſt ſo many *ſuggeſtions of the ſpirit*, and *checks of conſcience*, and are brought to effect through ſo *many thoughts*, and ſo *long contrivance*; that they *deſtroy*, not only that *innocence* which is the *condition of our ſtate of Grace*; but alſo that *habitual temper and inclination*, which is the *principle* and *foundation of it* too. They unravel all, and ſet us to begin again the work of reformation anew. Of which ſort are *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Perjury*, *Sacri-*

ledge,

ledge, Murder, Adultery, Robbery, Oppreſſion, entring into the fields of the fatherleſs and widow, and ſuch like. For theſe ſins do not only *deſtroy a mans acceptance with God for the preſent*; but moreover they *lay waſte his conſcience*, and *ſpoil all his virtuous temper* and inclination, whereby he ſhould recover himſelf afterwards; whence they are call'd p *wounding*, and *waſting ſins*. And this effect they have, becauſe in the very acting of them there is uſually ſo much *time* and *deliberation*, and a ſucceſſion of ſo many *deſires* and *averſations*, *hopes* and *fears*, *chuſings* and *refuſals*; that the ſin has had a great many imperfect conſents, before it come to have that which is laſt and prevailing. Our wills, by a number of *imperfect wouldings*, are in great part accuſtomed, and have almoſt wholly learned to *unwill* all that good, which they *willed* before; ſo that there is an *imperfect habit* contained in the *very action*. Beſides, what is moſt of all conſiderable, theſe being ſuch ſins as are made up of ſeveral *combined* together, before we can bring our ſelves to act them, our *conſcience of their guiltineſs* muſt be in great part *extinguiſhed*, and the *good ſpirit of God* exceedingly *grieved*, if not wholly *quenched*. For *Adultery* implies *fornication*, and *injuſtice*; *Sacriledge* contains *theft*, and *impiety*; *Perjury* includes *lying*, and *prophaneneſs*; and ſo for all the reſt. Now theſe being *complicated ſins*, and crimes of an *accumulated wickedneſs*; mens *Conſciences* are more than ordinarily *afraid* of them, and the *good ſpirit of God* extraordinarily concerned to keep them from them. They ſuggeſt and repreſent the greatneſs of the ſin, and the greatneſs of the danger. Which they do with ſuch conſtancy and importunity, that before men have ſilenced the one, and extreamly grieved, if not wholly quenched the other, they cannot overcome their own fears, and venture upon the commiſſion of them. And here now is the

p *Peccata ſaucia*, and *vaſtantia*.

the danger leſt their own *Conſcience* be laid aſleep, and *Gods holy ſpirit* leave them. For *he will not alwayes ſtrive with men*, Gen. 6. 3. and *from him that hath not*; that is, hath not uſed that talent of Grace which was granted to him, as the wicked Servant had not done who had hid it, *verſ.* 25. *ſhall be taken even that*, ſayes our Saviour, *which he hath*, Mat. 25. 29. And when men reſiſt the motions of the Holy Ghoſt to ſuch a degree as this, and after all the repeated ſuggeſtions, and obedient inclinations which he threw into their ſouls, during all that time wherein the ſin was under deliberation, reſolve ſtill to venture on it: no wonder if, being thus grieved and rejected, he withdraw himſelf, for ſome time at leaſt, if not for altogether.

And of all this we have a clear inſtance in holy *David*, upon that waſting ſin of his in *murdering Uriah*, and *adulterating his wife*. For upon that he felt both theſe loſſes which I have mention'd, (*viz.*) the *laying waſte of the virtuous temper of his own ſpirit*, and *the deprivation of the good ſpirit of God*. For this ſin being ſo long in acting (as it muſt needs be, ſince it required ſuch a train of wicked plots and contrivances to the conſummation of it) he muſt needs feel all the oppoſition that could be made from the checks of his *own Conſcience*, and from the reſtraints of the Spirit of God. And when he had born down both for the ſatisfaction of his luſt, and trampled them under foot for the conſummation of his ſin; then doth he begin to feel the want, and to be all in fear of *loſing the habitual rectitude of his own ſpirit*, (which, by ſo many contrary actions implyed in that one great one, he had almoſt quite deſtroyed) and of *ſuffering the deſertion of Gods ſpirit*, which by his continued provocations contained in it likewiſe, he had well nigh abandon'd. For to this purpoſe we find him complaining, and crying out in his

Pſalm

Pſalm of repentance for that great tranſgreſſion, whereof, at the 14th *verſe*, he makes expreſs mention. *Create*, or new make *in me a clean heart, O God*, ſayes he, *and renew a right ſpirit within me.* And beſides that, *caſt me not away* neither *from thy preſence, nor take thy holy ſpirit from me*, Pſal. 51. 10, 11.

So that as for the effect of wilfull ſins, it is plainly this. All *wilfull ſins whatſoever deſtroy our ſtate of acceptance with God*, and *put us into a ſtate of enmity and death for the preſent.* But as for *thoſe* among them which *lay waſte the Conſcience*, they effect not *that* only, but moreover they *deſtroy that virtuous habit*, and *grieve*, nay, ſometimes *drive away that good ſpirit*, whereby we ſhould reſtore our ſelves to it for the *time to come.*

And becauſe this *latter* ſort have this miſchievous effect, in making our return thus *dubious* and *difficult*; they are particularly taken notice of in the accounts of God. Thus, for inſtance, *David* had committed ſeveral *deadly ſins*, for ſome whereof he had undergone ſevere puniſhment; as particularly for that proud preſumptuous offence of his in *numbring of the people*, 2 Sam. 24. 1, 10, 13, &c. But theſe made no notable decay, or devaſtation in the virtuous temper of his ſoul; for his own heart admoniſhed him of the evil which he had done, and he *repented quickly*, and roſe again without delay, and ſo was preſently reſtored to what he was before. But as for his ſin in the matter of *Uriah*, it was a *q laſting work*, and took up a *long r deliberation* and *contrivance.* It made his *Conſcience hard* and *inſenſible*; for his own heart did not ſmite him into a change, nor enable him to *repent* without a *s monitor.* So that his ſtay in this crying ſin was *long*, and his return both *difficult* and *dangerous.* And therefore in that character which is given of him by the *Holy Ghoſt*, when all the reſt are buried in ſilence, *this* ſin particularly is expreſly

q 2 Sam. 11. 4, 5, 27.
r verſ. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15.
s Chap. 12. verſ. 1, 5.

preſly ſpecified. *David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, ſave only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite,* 1 *Kings* 15. 5.

Thus then, as for this *firſt* part of our enquiry, we ſee plainly of all our *wilful ſins*, that they are *not conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace and ſalvation*, but that they *are all deadly and damning for the preſent, if we dye under them without repenting of them*; and as for the *future*, that they *do all of them wound and weaken*, but *ſome almoſt quite deſtroy, that habitual, inherent Grace, whereby we ſhould recover our ſelves to the ſtate of pardon for the time to come.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the nature of involuntary ſins, and of their conſiſtence with a ſtate of ſalvation.

The CONTENTS.

Of involuntary actions. Of what account the forced actions of the Body are in morals. Two cauſes of involuntarineſs. First, *The violence of mens paſſions. It doth not excuſe.* Secondly, *The ignorance of their underſtandings. This is the cauſe of all our conſiſtent failings, and the ſins that are involuntary upon this account are conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation. This proved,* 1. *From their unavoidableneſs; The Cauſes of it; in what ſenſe any particular ſin among them is ſaid to be avoidable.* 2. *From the nature of God. A repreſentation of God's nature from his own Word, and mens experience.*

perience. The Argument drawn from it for the conſiſtence of ſuch failings. 3. *From the nature and declarations of the Goſpel. It is fitted to beget a cheerful and filial confidence, and therefore is called the Spirit of Adoption. The Argument from this. The Scripture-Declarations and Examples in this matter. Theſe Arguments ſummed up.*

THE *ſecond* ſort of ſins are ſuch as are *involuntary* and *unchoſen*; and *theſe are conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation, and ſuch as Chriſt's Goſpel doth not eternally threaten, but graciouſly bears, and in great mercy diſpenſeth with.*

As for the *involuntarineſs* of mens actions, that which produces and effects it, is not any *force from without upon our will* it ſelf. All the things in the *material* world can never bind and compel the will of man, ſeeing it is no *phyſical, bodily thing*, ſo as that any *bodily force* might act upon it. Nothing in the world can make us will and like that which we do not like; the will of man is liable to no * *compulſion*, it has this priviledge above all other things on the Earth, that nothing about it can force or conſtrain it, but that ſtill it wills and chuſes as it ſelf pleaſeth.

* *Voluntas non poteſt cogi.* Axioma Scholaſt.

As for the *actions* of men indeed, they are *mixt* things. Becauſe they flow from the *whole man*, both *Body* and *Soul*; and *beginning* in the *mind* or *will within*, are *conſummate* in our *outward* and *bodily operation*. And as for the *laſt* of theſe, *viz.* our *bodily operation*, it may be *forced*, foraſmuch as one Body is liable to the force and compulſion of another. Thus, for inſtance, a *chaſt* Matrons Body may be *violently raviſhed*. A *peaceable* mans hand, may, by the overpowring ſtrength of another man, be made the *forced inſtrument* of anothers *murther*. The bodily work and operation can be for-

ced, seeing other Bodies more powerful than it self can compel it. And in this sense the *Schools* understand the word *action*, *viz.* only for the *action of the Body*, when they make one *kind* of *involuntary* actions to be involuntary by *b violence* or *compulsion*; that being a thing whereto not the will it self, but the body only can be liable.

b *Invitæ per vim.*

But now these forced actions of the Body, although in *Nature* they be looked upon as actions, yet in *morality* they are esteemed as none at all. That is, *Laws*, which are the Rules of *good* and *evil*, and the measure of mens *manners*, take no notice of them, nor look upon themselves to be either broken or kept by them; because it is not the Body and *Carkass*, but the *whole man*, consisting of Soul as well as Body, which Laws are given as a Guide to. So that a *ravished Matron*, if only her Body suffered, and there was no concurrence of her own consent to it, is as *chast* and *unpolluted* in God's account and in the censure of the Law, as is the *purest Virgin*. And therefore it was a great truth, whereby *Collatinus* and *Brutus* went about to comfort the poor *deflowred Lucretia* in c *Livy*; *It is the mind*, say they, *which sins, and not the Body; so that in those actions wherein there is nothing of will and deliberation, there is likewise no fault or transgression.* And this Case is expresly thus determined, *Deut.* 22. For in the Case of the *ravished Damsel*, whose will was no way consenting to it, but who did all that she could against it, it is expresly ordered, that *to her there is nothing to be done* by way of punishment, because *in her there is no sin worthy of death; for like as when one man is slain by another, even so is this case*; she is not acting, but suffering in it, *ver.* 26.

c *Mentem peccare, non corpus, & unde consilium abfuerit, culpam abesse.* Liv. Dec. 1. vers. fin.

As for him indeed who chose thus to force us, 'tis true that the Law will interpret what is done by our Bodies

Bodies as *his* action, becauſe he freely choſe ſo to compel us. Our bodily Members, which were forced by him, were his inſtruments, and not our own; for he it was, and not we our ſelves, who ordered and directed them. We were the ſame in his hands, as a *Sword* is in the hand of a man, *viz.* the Inſtrument only, but not the Agent. So that what was done by us is not our own, but his who was pleaſed ſo to make uſe of us. In him therefore the unlawful action, being willed and choſen, is really a ſin and tranſgreſſion. But in us, ſince it was not our own, it is looked upon as none. There is nothing charged upon our account for it, more than if it had never been done; becauſe we did not act, but ſuffer; it had nothing of our own will, and therefore it can be no Article of our condemnation.

So much of any action therefore as is forced, *viz.* the *outward, bodily operation*, in the eſtimate of *good* and *evil*, of *vice* and *vertue*, is of no account to *us* whatever it be to *others*; becauſe it is not our *own*. For to make any action *ours*, it muſt proceed, not from our *Bodies*, but from our *ſelves*, who have *Souls* as well as *Bodies*: it muſt come from the will within, as well as from the body without; and as for our *will it ſelf*, 'tis plain that it can never be made to chuſe *involuntarily by force*, ſince it is not ſubject to any *forcible violence* and *compulſion*.

But although thoſe actions which we exert our *ſelves*, and wherein we are not meerly paſſive inſtruments in the hands of others, cannot be made involuntary by any force from *without* upon the will it ſelf: yet may they become ſo from ſomething elſe *within* us. For our wills are not the *only internal Principle* of humane actions, but *ſeveral others* concur with them, whereby their choice it ſelf is influenced. Our *wills* indeed *chuſe* and *command our actions*; but then our *paſſions*

move, and our *understandings direct* and carry away our very wills themselves. So that they are set in a middle Station, being subject to be acted upon and hurried away by some; as well as they are impowered to command, and govern others.

1. Mens wills are subject to be violently acted by their *passions*, which hurry them on to consent to those things, which are both *without*, and *against* their *habitual liking* and *inclination*. When any passion is grown too strong for them, although they are afraid to act that sin which it hales them to, yet can they not withstand it. For the *Law of sin in the Members* is of more force with them, and prevails more over them, than the *Law of God in the mind*. So that although they have several exceptions against it, they are not for all that able to refuse it; but they are overcome by it, and yield at last to act it, though unwillingly, and to fulfil it, though with trouble and regret.

Now here is an unwillingness, 'tis true, and things are done, which otherwise would not be done, because the power of mens *lusts* and *passions* is so strong, that their *wills* cannot restrain them. For all the interest, which the contrary motives of *Reason* and *Religion* can make against them, is not able to contend with them. They *can* and *do* effect *something* indeed, so as that the will, when it doth consent to them, doth it not *fully* and *freely*, with perfect ease and pleasure; but *unwillingly*, with fear and reluctance. But yet that which they do is not *enough*, for the other side prevails, and the will is not able to hold out, but yields at last to fulfil the lust, and to act the sin still.

But now although this be *some sort* of involuntariness, yet is it not *that* which will excuse our transgressions, and make all those sins, which we commit under it, to be esteemed consistent slips and pardonable infirmities.

For

For this ſtate of *unwilling Sinners*, as we heard *d* above, is no ſtate of *mercy*, but a ſtate of *death*. It is the ſtate which S. *Paul* deſcribes in the *ſeventh Chapter* of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, *viz.* a ſtate of *captivity* and *ſlavery under ſin*, ver. 14, 23; and thereupon a ſtate of miſery and *death*, ver. 24. All the *Grace* which Chriſts Goſpel allows to it, is a Grace of *deliverance*; a Grace that ſhall help us out of it, and reſcue us from it. In this ſtate of *weakneſs* and *infirmity* Chriſt found us. For *whilſt we were yet without ſtrength to help our ſelves*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *Chriſt dyed for us*, Rom. 5. 6. But now ſince he has dyed for us, he will not leave us in it, but reſcue and deliver us out of it. For *now he having dyed for us, we are likewiſe to reckon our ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin for him; that it ſhould no longer* maſter and prevail over us to *reign in our mortal bodies* ſo far, as *that we ſhould fulfil the luſts thereof*, Rom. 6. 11, 12. And as for our bodily *members*, which are the Stage whereon our *luſts* and *paſſions* reign, we are to *yield them up* now, *not* any longer *inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto* the ſervice of *ſin*, *but inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto the ſervice of God*, ver. 13.

d Book 3. Ch. 4.

If therefore we are truly *Chriſtians*, and ſuch as Chriſt came to make us, upon our becoming which he has procured Grace and pardon for us, we are not *enſlaved* and *led Captives* by our *paſſions*, but have *conquered* and *ſubdued* them. This S *Paul* affirms expreſly. For *they that are Chriſt's*, ſayes he, *have crucified the fleſh, with the* e *paſſions* or affections *and luſts*, Gal. 5. 24.

e παθήμασι.

But then beſides our luſts and paſſions, which although they do make *ſome*, cannot yet effect a *pardonable* unwillingneſs; there ſtill remains one cauſe more, which may produce it. For,

2. Men are ſubject to be carried on, to work what is both *without*, and *againſt their habitual liking* and *inclination*,

nation, through *ignorance*. And this is the *great ſource*, and *intire cauſe* of all our *conſiſtent ſlips* and *pardonable infirmities*.

As for the *will* of man, it is a *blind* faculty, it can chuſe nothing till the underſtanding ſhews it. That is, we cannot deſire or will a thing before we ſee it, nothing can be choſen which is not apprehended. So that if at any time we offend through *ignorance* or *inconſideration*, and do amiſs, either becauſe we did not *underſtand* our Duty, or becauſe we did not *think* of it; unleſs our ignorance and inconſideration be *themſelves* damnable, and charged upon us to our condemnation, nothing elſe will. For God will *f* impute nothing to us at the laſt Day, either to ſave, or to deſtroy us, but what proceeded from our own will and choice; and therefore if any ſinful action be *innocently involuntary*, it is likewiſe *uncondemning*.

f —— Ergo non eſt cui recte imputetur peccatum niſi volenti. Aug. de lib. arbit. l. 3. c. 17. οὐ λογίζονται ὅσαι μὴ κατὰ προαίρεσιν συνίσανται· ὁ γὰρ ἐπιθυμήσας, ἥδη μεμοίχευκε φησίν. Clem. Alexand. Strom. 2. p. 284.

And this now is the Caſe of all our *ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions* of the Law of God, which are *conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace and ſalvation*. We act them without underſtanding or conſidering of them, and ſo they are involuntary and unchoſen. For in ſome of them we do not *think* or *conſider* of what we do at all; and in others, although we know the action, yet are we ignorant of the *ſinfulneſs* of it; ſo that even in the choice of that, this ſtill remains unchoſen.

For *ſin* and *obedience* is not *all* acting of a thing, but an acting of it with *certain ends* and *deſigns*. If we would be thought to obey Gods Law, we muſt do it becauſe he requires it; and if we be judged to have ſinned againſt it, it will be for doing ſomething when we ſaw that he had forbidden it. For that ſervice which God requires, is not a heartleſs ſervice, but a ſervice of the will and choice. So that we muſt do what he enjoyns for his ſake, and becauſe his Law requires

quires it, if we expect that he ſhould take himſelf to be obeyed in it: and we muſt chuſe to do what we *g* know is againſt his Law, for the ſake of ſin, before we need to fear that he will puniſh us as men that have ſinned againſt him. Obedience then and diſobedience, beſides the action, require likewiſe the eye and intention; *viz.* the chuſing of what we do becauſe his Law commands it, or the chuſing it when we know that his Law has forbidden it. But if this knowledge of his Law be wanting, although we chuſe the evil action, yet do we not chuſe the ſin, becauſe we do not ſee that it is ſinful. For we would not chuſe it if we knew that he had forbid it, ſo that in our hearts there is no contempt of him, or diſobedience at all.

g *Non facit aliquid contra Legem Legis ignarus —— Nullus poteſt eius rei prævaricator eſſe quam neſcit.* Salvian de Gub. Dei l. 4. p. 134, 138. Ed. Oxon.

When therefore at any time we *knowingly* and *deliberately* chuſe an action, which we do not know to be ſinful, except that ignorance be our own fault, whatever the action be as to *it ſelf*, yet as to its *relation to the Law*, viz. its *ſinfulneſs* and *diſobedience*, it is not *will'd* and *choſen*. For ſince we did not ſee its ſinfulneſs, we could not chuſe and conſent to it. So that there is no rebellion in our *wills*, whatſoever there may ſeem to be in our *action*; but they may notwithſtanding it be ſtill intirely ſubject unto God, and ready to obey him in every thing, wherein they ſee he has laid his Commands upon them.

As ſome of our *conſiſtent* ſlips and tranſgreſſions therefore are not *thought* of, or *conſidered at all*; ſo others, although they are known and conſidered in *themſelves*, are yet unknown under that *relation* of *ſinful actions*; ſo that the *ſin* is all the while unſeen, and therefore involuntary and unchoſen.

Now as for theſe ſlips and tranſgreſſions which are thus unknown, and thereby involuntary; they are conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace, and ſuch as Chriſts Goſpel doth

doth not eternally threaten, but in great mercy bear, and graciously dispense with.

† Chap. 1, 2. To convince us of the truth whereof, besides all that has been † above discoursed upon this Argument, it is *first* considerable, that all these *involuntary failings* upon *ignorance* or *want of knowledge*, are *unavoidable*, and God, we know, will never damn any man for doing that which could not be avoided. For no man can chuse to shun that which he doth not see, but his understanding must first discern and apprehend a thing, before his will is in any capacity to refuse it. And forasmuch as these slips are no matter of our sight and knowledge, they can be none of our refusal and avoidance.

Indeed if a man should *pause* and *deliberate*, *watch* and *examine* at *all times*; albeit he might still be subject to *one* sort of *involuntary* actions, *viz.* that which arises from his *ignorance of his Duty*; yet would he not be liable to the *other*, which results from this *inconsideration of it*. For where a man has time, and his Powers are awake, so that he is fit to look about him; his thoughts are his own, and he may fix them upon the consideration of what he pleases. And where he has the power to consider of any action, he has the power likewise to avoid it. And this is that which is pleaded in behalf of *mens ability to keep all Gods Commands intirely*, and to *live wholly without sin*, by *Atticus* in S. *Hierom*: i *Thus much we say, That a man may live without all sin if he will, for such time and place as his mind is intent, and his care is at stretch, and his bodily infirmities will suffer him to continue so.*

i *Hoc & nos dicimus posse hominem non peccare si velit, pro tempore, pro loco, pro imbecillitate corporea, quamdiu intentus est animus, quamdiu chorda nullo vitio laxatur in cithara.* Hieron Dial. adv. Pel. l. 3. p. 302. Ed. Erasm.

But as for this power of avoiding all involuntary sins which arise from inconsideration, it is no power at all. For herein we must know lyes every mans *unavoidable weakness*

weakneſs and *infirmity*, that whereas our obedience is required at *all times*, this fitneſs is only in ſome *certain time* and *place*. For no man is alwayes in that good condition, to be *wiſe* and *well-diſpoſed*, *watchful* and *ſtanding upon his Guard*. But he *forgets* when he ſhould *remember*, and his faculties are *aſleep* when they ſhould be *awake*, and he is *diverted by other buſineſs*, and *hindred by intervening accidents*. So that ſometimes either he has not *leiſure* to conſider in, or his faculties are not *well diſpoſed*, and his thoughts free and at his own command, ſo as, when he has time, duly to conſider in it.

And this evil ſtate, which thus unfits a man for conſideration, is not alwayes in his own power, and at his own choice whether he ſhall fall under it or no. For as for the *want of time*, a man in this world is placed in a *croud of buſineſs*, and whilſt his thoughts are hot in the purſuit of one, another many times waits for him.

And becauſe opportunities do not ſtay till we are at leiſure, we muſt take them when we find them; ſo that we act oftentimes without conſidering, ſince, if we ſhould ſtay to think, we ſhould ſtay beyond that time which we are to act in, if we do act at all. Beſides, our *powers of action*, eſpecially where there is any ſtrong temptation of *pleaſure* or *profit* to act for, are *forward of themſelves*, and ready to ſpring out upon the firſt occaſion. As ſoon as the temptation is offered to our thoughts, our wills indeliberately approve, and all our bodily and active powers, by an unconſidered emanation, ſtart up to purſue and endeavour after it; whence thinking and conſidering is neceſſary, not to raiſe, but to ſtop and reſtrain them. And then if either our thoughts have been otherwiſe engaged, and ſo cannot readily withdraw themſelves to conſider of a new object; or if our thinking powers themſelves are

dull and heavy, and thereby unfit to consider of it: we presently and indeliberately go on to act the thing, without all pausing and due consideration.

For this other reason of inconsideration also, *viz.* the *want of power*, or *indisposition of our thinking faculty it self*, is not a thing wholly subject to our own will, to chuse *whether*, or *when* we shall fall under it. Because in this state of our souls, during their being here united to our Bodies, they make use of our bodily powers in their use of reason, and in the very exercise of thought and consideration; and therefore even in *them* they are liable to be changed and altered, just as our Bodies are. For in a *brisk* and *healthy* Body, our *thoughts* are *free*, and *quick*, and *easie*; but if our *Bodies* are *dull* and *indisposed*, our *minds* are so too. A *heaviness in our heads*, will make us *heavy in our apprehensions*; and a discomposure in our Spirits, whether through the strength of *Wine*, or of a *violent passion*; will make us discomposed and incoherent in our thoughts also. And if there be an utter *perverting*, or *blasting* of our *bodily powers*, as is often seen in the bodily Diseases of *Epilepsies*, *Phrensies*, *Apoplexies*, and the like; there will be the same *perversion*, or *utter extinction* of our *conceptions* likewise. But now these indispositions of our Bodies, which thus unfit our very souls for thought and due consideration, are not in our power to order, *when*, and *where* they shall seize upon us. For our Bodies are liable to be thus acted upon by any other Bodies of the world, whether we will or no. A *heavy air*, or an *indisposing accident*, will work a change in our bodily temper without our leave; and when once that is indisposed, we cannot hinder our thoughts themselves from being indisposed too.

And since it is not in our power at all times to chuse, whether or no we will pause and consider; although we can

can avoid offending in thoſe Caſes wherein we can conſider of it, yet is it manifeſt that we cannot avoid offence in all.

Indeed if we take any *particular action*, and in our own thoughts *ſeparate* it from any *particular time*, and from the *Chain* of *other particular actions* amongſt which it lyes; we ſhall be apt to affirm, that it is ſuch whereof we can think and conſider. For take any action by it ſelf, and being aware of it, we can let other things alone, and watch for it particularly; and when we do ſo, we are ſure to find one time or other when our underſtandings are diſpoſed for a due deliberation, and fit and able to conſider of it. But then we muſt take notice that this ſuppoſed ſtate of an action, as *ſeparate from the Crowd of other actions*, and *determined to no time* is only *imaginary* and in *ſpeculation*. For when we come to practiſe them, though in ſome we have *time* and *power* enough, yet in others we find that we have not. Becauſe either they come in the *throng of other buſineſs*, and then our thoughts, being hotly employed upon other things, cannot ſo eaſily be drawn from them upon the ſudden to conſider of them; or, if they call upon us when we have time to conſider in, yet it happens that our *faculties are heavy* and *indiſpoſed*, and ſo we exert them ſtill without due conſideration. When we think of any particular action *by it ſelf* therefore, we take it out of the *throng of buſineſs* wherein it is involved, and out of that *time wherein we are indiſpoſed*; and then we are bold to conclude that we can conſider of it. But when *we come to practiſe it*, we find that our former ſpeculation ſuppoſed falſe, and that it comes *mixt* with a *crowd of other things*, or in a *time when we have troubled* and *diſcompoſed thoughts*: So that how ſubject ſoever it was to our conſideration, in that *ſeparate ſtate* wherein we *imagined* it, yet have we no

power to consider of it in that *throng of busines*, or *indisposition of faculties*, wherein we *find* it.

And this is verily the Case of several of our slips and transgressions. For look upon any of the particulars by it self, and take it asunder from the rest; and then we shall be confident that we may bethink our selves and consider of it. But take it, as indeed it lyes, among the mixt Crowd of other actions, or as offered to our indisposed understandings; and then we shall find that it slips from us without all consideration.

And this, as I take it, is intended by a great man, when he tells us of sins of *pardonable infirmity*, that *the* k *liberty which they seem to have when we consider them in special and asunder, they indeed have not when we consider them in the general*; viz. *as involved in the crowd of other actions amongst whom they lye, and altogether.* Upon which account of their having in them no choice and consideration, he questions whether they contain that, which can in strictness and propriety of speech be called *sin*. And indeed if we understand the same by *sin* which S. *John* doth, when he gives the explication of it, 1 *John* 3. 4. (*viz.* a l *rejecting* or *contemning of the Law*, in which sense only a state of Grace is destroyed by it, and he who is born of God cannot commit it;) they have not. For men cannot be said to reject and *m* despise a Law, when they do not see and consider of it.

k *Libertatem eam, quam in specie habere videntur, in sua generalitate considerata non habeant.* Grot. de Jure Belli, l. 2. c. 20. sect. 19.

l ἀνομία.

m *Nil contemptu agunt cœlestium præceptorum, præcepta Domini nescientes,* &c. —— *Nemo ignota contemnit,* &c. *Salv.* de Gub. Dei, l. 4. p. 134. & 148. Ed. Oxon.

The *liberty* then which we have about those *slips* and *transgressions* which we do not *know* and *consider* of, is in effect no liberty at all. For we neither chuse the disobedient *action it self*, nor the *cause* of it. We do not chuse the sinful action it self, because we do not know

or

or conſider of it: Nor do we chuſe the inconſideration, becauſe it is not left to our liberty, whether in ſome of our actions we ſhould be inconſiderate or no.

And ſince our ſlips and failings which are thus involuntary by ignorance, cannot be choſen or refuſed, 'tis plain that they cannot be avoided. And as for all thoſe things which we cannot avoid, it is clear from what has been ſaid above, that the Goſpel doth not eternally threaten us, nor will God ever condemn us for them.

But that theſe *ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions*, which being thus *unknown* are likewiſe *unchoſen*, and ſo *unavoidable*, are not *eternally puniſhable by the Goſpel*, but *conſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace* and *Salvation*, will further appear if we conſider,

Firſt, The *Nature of God.*

Secondly, The *nature and plain declarations of the Goſpel.*

1. I ſay their conſiſtency with a *ſtate of Grace*, or *Gods favour*, will plainly appear if we conſider the *Nature of God.*

God is the moſt *Gracious*, *Loving*, and *good natured Being* in the whole world. For all the love and kindneſs, that appears among us men, proceeds from him, and maks us to reſemble him, and to be like unto him. Nay, he is not only *Loving*, but even *Love* it ſelf. For *God*, ſayes St. *John*, *is Love*, *and he who dwells in love dwells in God*, *and God in him*, 1 Joh. 4. 16. And if we will take that character which he gives of himſelf, it is wholly made up of the *various* inſtances of *Mercy* and *Goodneſs*. *The Lord*, ſayes he to *Moſes*, *the Lord God merciful and gracious*, *long-ſuffering*, *and abundant in goodneſs and truth*; *keeping mercy for thouſands*, *forgiving iniquity*, *tranſgreſſion and ſin*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. All his delight is in exerciſing Love, and ſhewing kindneſs. For he ſwears to us as he *lives*, that *he has no delight* at all

in

in the death of a ſinner, but had rather that every *wicked man ſhould turn from his wickedneſs, and live*, Ezech. 33.11. He is by no means *forward to eſpie faults*, or *malicious to miſconſtrue actions*, or *prone to admit of provocation*, or *implacably angry when he is once provoked*, or *cruelly vindictive when once he is angred. The Lord*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *is merciful, and gracious, ſlow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide* when he has juſt reaſon for it, *nor keepeth he his anger for ever*, Pſal. 103. 8, 9. He is not at all of the humour of *ſevere maſters*, who are prone to take offence; but, like a moſt *tender father*, he is all benignity and goodneſs. For if any thing be pitiable, he pities it; if any thing is done amiſs, he is ſlow to wrath, and eaſie to forgive it. *Like as a father pitieth his own children*, even *ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*, Pſal. 103.13. Nay, take this Love and Pity of a *Parent* where it is at the higheſt pitch of all, (*viz.*) in *mothers towards their moſt helpleſs*, and ſo *moſt pitiable infants*; and yet this tenderneſs of God doth infinitely exceed it. *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may forget*, ſayes God by his Prophet *Iſaiah, but I will not forget thee*, Iſa. 49. 15.

Thus *Loving*, *Pitiful*, and *Benign a Nature* do the *Scriptures* repreſent *God* to be. And what they *declare* of him, all the world have *experienced*, and found by him. For every *impenitent ſinner* is a laſting monument of his *long ſuffering* and *forbearance*; and every *proſperous event*, and deliverance in the world, is an effect of his *boundleſs love* and *kindneſs*. He is infinitely good beyond all *deſert*, nay, in ſpite of all *provocation*. For *he is loving* even *unto the unthankful and the evil, making his ſon to ſhine, and his rain to fall*, and all the other mercies of life to deſcend *upon the unjuſt* as well as upon

upon *the juſt*, upon them who contemn, as well as on them who obey him; as our Saviour obſerved, *Mat.* 5.45. *Luk.* 6.35. And this he is to ſuch an aſtoniſhing degree, as to beſtow upon them, not only the bleſſings of his *ſubſtance*, of his *protection*, and of his *kind providence*: but alſo, what is a wonder to conceive, for their ſakes to part with his own *well-beloved*, and ſo much the more beloved, becauſe his *only begotten Son*. *For God*, as ſaith the Apoſtle, *hath recommended his love to us, in that whilſt we were* ſinners and *enemies*, *Chriſt* his Son came from him, and *died for us*, Rom. 5. 8.

Thus wondrouſly pitiful, obliging, and good natured then is God, according to that account which both the *Scripture*, and the *Experience* of the whole world give of him.

And now let any man think with himſelf, how ſo *ſurpaſſing kind*, and *infinitely gracious* a nature as this, is like to be affected with the *ignorant*, or *inconſiderate ſlips* and *errors* of his *Servants*? Will he be utterly offended with them, ſo as quite to caſt them off, and for ever to condemn them? No certainly, but in great mercy he will pity and bear with them. For theſe ſlips, where we do not *conſider*, or where we *err* and do *not underſtand* our duty, are ſuch inſtances of diſobedience, as imply nothing of *contempt* or of a *rebellious heart*, nor have any thing of our *will* in them. They are clearly involuntary, ſo that whatſoever the *action* may appear to be, the *will* it *ſelf* is innocent. For the diſobedience cannot be choſen, ſince it is not underſtood; which indeed, in the notion and interpretation of Gods Law, makes it not to be that ſin and diſobedience which is threatned, but ſomething elſe: for that ſin, as S. *John* tells us, is a *rejecting* or a *renouncing of the Law*, whereas in theſe ſlips where we do not ſee it, 'tis plain that we cannot renounce it.

And.

And since they have nothing in them of a disobedient will, or of a rebellious heart; can any man think that so gracious and pitiful a nature should be so highly provoked with them, as for ever to condemn his own *honest servants*, and *otherwise obedient children* upon the account of them? Whosoever thou art, who art inclined to think thus, let me advise thee to consider a little what *Love* is, and whether it can possibly be guilty of such hard usage. If thou hast any competent degrees of that Love and Pity in thine own heart, which are so infinite in God, bethink thy self whether *thou* couldst do it, for that is the way, and thence take thy measures in judging whether or no God can. Doth any *gracious master* use that severity, towards the oversights and indiscretions of his *honest servant*? or, to rise yet higher, can any *tender Parent* shew that rigor, upon every error and inconsideration of his *heartily obedient child*? Is not *every good man* prone to pass by such offences, as are committed unwillingly against him; and the more he has of goodness, is he not still more forward to pardon and bear with them? There is no Nature upon Earth that is kind and pitiful, but will make allowances for those things, which proceed from want of understanding, and will pass over those miscarriages, which imply nothing of ill will or ill intention. Every good man will overlook and connive at them, when they are committed by a perfect stranger; but then most of all, when they are incurr'd by his own intimate and dear *acquaintance* or *relations*, by his own *servant*, or his own *child*. This, I say, every good and loving man doth, and the more he has of love and goodness, the proner still he is to do it. For it is a natural and inseparable effect of charity, so that in what proportion it increases, in the same must this increase likewise. *Charity*, saves S. *Paul*, *suffereth long, and is kind,*

charity

charity is not eaſily provoked, charity thinketh no evil, charity beareth all things, and endureth all things, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 7. The more therefore that any man has of charity, the more will he be ſure to ſhow of ſufferance, of pity, of endurance of ſuch ſlips and overſights, as are conſiſtent with an honeſt, and otherwiſe obedient heart.

And now ſince thoſe *imperfect* meaſures and degrees of Love which are found in the hearts of all good men, are of force more than ſufficient to make them pity, and bear with theſe ſlips of honeſt ignorance and inconſideration: that *infinite height* of Love which dwells in God Almighty, muſt needs make him bear with them much rather. For the moſt loving man upon earth hath not the thouſandth part of his affection; the more loving any men are indeed, the more ſtill they are *like* him, but when they are arrived to the higheſt pitch of what *humanity* can bear, it is not poſſible, that they ſhould in any meaſure *equal* him. And ſince Gods Love is infinitely more, his pity and forbearance towards ſuch pitiable overſights, which is a moſt natural and neceſſary effect of it, cannot poſſibly be leſs than ours is. No, if no kind-hearted loving man would, it muſt needs be the greateſt injury to an infinitely loving God, to ſuſpect that ever he ſhould be ſevere in puniſhing us for them.

If we *ask Gods Pardon* then for all our *ignorant*, and *inconſiderate* ſlips and failings; he is as ready to *give*, as we are to *deſire* it. And this we are aſſured of, becauſe it is no more than we daily experience at the hands of every *loving* and *good natured man*. For ſince God cannot be *equalled*, and much leſs *out-done* by the very beſt of us in kindneſs; what the weak Love of a man doth every day effect, that certainly the infinite Love of God will effect more abundantly. And for this way

of arguing, it is no more than our *Saviour* himſelf uſes in another caſe, when he ſhows that *God will give good gifts unto his children* at their requeſt, becauſe all *earthly Parents* do it unto theirs daily; whenas yet their Love, which makes them grant the good things asked ſo readily, is infinitely exceeded by the Love of God, *Luk.* 11.13.

Thus from the conſideration of *Gods Nature* it plainly appears, that thoſe ſlips and tranſgreſſions, which are committed *involuntarily* and *unavoidably*, becauſe *ignorantly* and *inconſiderately*, do not put us out of a *ſtate of Grace*, but *conſiſt* with it.

Which will appear yet further, if we conſider,

Secondly, The *Nature, and plain declarations of the Goſpel.*

As for the *Nature of the Goſpel*, St. *Paul* affirms plainly, that it is of ſuch a *temper* and *genius*, as tends to ingenerate in the profeſſors of it, not a *ſpirit of fear and ſlavery*, which they are poſſeſſed with who ſerve a *rigorous* and *auſtere Lord*; but a *ſpirit of chearfulneſs and free confidence*, ſuch as they enjoy, who ſerve a *gracious and a loving Father*. For he tells the *Jews* at *Rome*, that in *embracing of Chriſts Goſpel* they *had not received* again *the ſpirit of bondage, unto* the poſſeſſing of their hearts with *fears* and ſcruples; *but the ſpirit of adoption, whereby* they were emboldned, with the chearfulneſs and confidence of ſons, to *cry* unto God *Abba, Father*, Rom. 8. 15. But now if the condition of the Goſpel it ſelf were ſo ſevere, as that, according to the tenour of it, theſe unavoidable ſlips, of inconſideration and ignorance, ſhould ſet God and us at enmity; no Chriſtian man could ever look upon God as upon his tender Father, with this ſpirit of filial freedom; but muſt needs fear and dread him, as his angry and avenging Lord. And the Goſpel requiring more of us under

der the forfeiture of Gods favour, than any man among us is able to perform; it could not miniſter to ingenerate in us a ſpirit of chearful confidence towards him, but, quite contrary to that, to fill us with inextricable doubts, and fears of him. As for theſe ſlips of ignorance then which cannot be avoided, we may be aſſured, that, according to the Goſpel, they never can be puniſh'd; for the New Covenant muſt bear with them, becauſe it cannot ingender in us this ſpirit of adoption, and filial confidence, without ſuch forbearance.

And then as for the *Declarations of the Goſpel*, in this matter they are very clear alſo. For, beſides thoſe places that are mentioned above, which ſhow clearly that *no involuntary ſins are damning*, and then certainly that our ſlips of *ignorance* are not, ſeeing they have the greateſt plea to involuntarineſs of any: I ſay, beſides thoſe, this conſiſtence of our unknown and unconſidered ſlips will be evident from other places alſo.

And for this, to ſeek no further, St. *James*'s Rule is full and plain. *To him that knoweth*, or, which comes to the ſame thing, if he will may know how *to do good*, and *doth it not*, *to him it is ſin*, Jam. 4. 17. If then we have no other ſins to anſwer for, but only theſe of inconſideration and ignorance, we are guilty of none wherefore we ſhall be condemned, theſe unknown ſins not being of that number.

And indeed St. *James*'s Rule is verified by *Scripture inſtances*. For holy *David* fell through *inconſideration*, and *unadviſedneſs* in *ſundry* things; as particularly in an inconſiderate *deſpairing of Gods mercy*, Pſal. 31. 22. and in an *exceſſive ſorrow for his Son Abſolom*, 2 Sam. 18. 33. and ch. 19. 4. But notwithſtanding theſe, and all other his unadviſed ſlips, he was all the while, a *man after Gods own heart*, a perſon *upright* and *acceptably obedient ſtill*.

Zacharias and *Elizabeth* were surprized no question, as well as other people are, into several slips and inconsiderate follies. For *one* we have mention'd, even in that *short* account which the Scriptures have given us of them, and that is this; *viz.* that at the first hearing of the joyful message of the Angel, he is *incredulous*, and is punished with dumbness for his *unbelief*, Luk. 1. 18, 20. But yet this and his other involuntary failings of like nature, come not into the account of his sins and disobedience when God speaks of him; for notwithstanding these their infirmities, of both of them we are told, that *they were righteous*, and that *before God, walking in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless*, Luk. 1.6.

As for *this sort* of slips and transgressions therefore, (*viz.*) our *sins of ignorance* and *inconsideration*; we see plainly that they never will be *charged upon us to our condemnation*. They do not destroy a *Saint*, or put us out of a state of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it. This must needs be true, for *they must be pardoned, because they cannot be avoided*. Besides, *the love and pitifulness of Gods Nature infers*, and the very *temper and genius of his Gospel supposes it*; *the Apostle plainly and fully declares it*; and *from Gods own mouth we are told of several of his dearest Saints, who have experienced the truth of it*. By all which it appears, that so long as we are guilty of no other slips but such as these, we are safe in Gods favour, and secure of his promises; we shall be accepted by him, although we live and dye in them.

And thus at length it appears what sins are *truly* and *innocently involuntary*; (viz.) *those which are acted ignorantly and unwittingly*: and that they do not *unsaint* a man, or destroy his state of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of theſe involuntary and conſiſtent ſins particularly; and of the firſt cauſe of innocent involuntarineſs, (viz.) *Ignorance.*

The CONTENTS.

A twofold knowledge neceſſary to choice, (viz.) *a general underſtanding, and particular conſideration. Conſiſtent ſins are either ſins of ignorance, or of inconſideration. Of ſins involuntary through ignorance of the general Law which makes a duty. How there is ſtill room for it in the world. Of crying ſins, which are againſt Natural Conſcience no man can be innocently ignorant. Of what others he may. This ignorance is neceſſary to all men for ſome time, and to ſome for all their lives. Mens ſins upon it are not damning. Of ſins involuntary through our ignorance of the preſent actions being included in the known Law, and meant by it. The cauſes of this ignorance.* Firſt, *The difference between Good and Evil in ſome actions being not in kind, but only in degree.* Secondly, *The limitedneſs of moſt Laws, which admit of exceptions.* Thirdly, *The indirect obligations which paſs upon ſeveral indifferent actions.* Fourthly, *The claſhing of ſeveral Laws, whence one is tranſgreſſed in purſuit of another; the great error upon this ſcore, is in the caſe of zeal.* Fifthly, *The claſhing of Laws with opinions or prejudices.*

BUt in regard this *conſiſtence* of our *ignorant* and *unconſidered* ſlips, is a matter of ſo great account in

in the *quieting*, and *comforting* of *troubled* and *fearful Consciences*; I will yet proceed to enquire of it more *distinctly*, and to shew what *particular ignorances* those are, which will cause that innocent involuntariness, which Christs Gospel doth not punish, as has been already shewn, but graciously dispense with.

To him that knows to do good, saith St. *James*, *and doth it not*; *to him 'tis sin*, Jam. 4. 17. And the reason why it is so is this, because that sin which a man knows and sees, he wills and chooses; but if he commit sin, when he sees it not, it is not imputed to him for a sin, because it is not chosen by him.

That we may clearly understand then *what ignorance renders any sin involuntary*, and therefore *unpunishable*, it is very proper to enquire what *knowledge is necessary unto choice*, and fit to make any sin to be esteemed *voluntary* and *chosen*.

Now to our *choice* of any sin, there is a *two-fold knowledge* necessary.

First, *An habitual* and *general knowledge that the action is sinful.*

Secondly, *An actual use and exercise of that knowledge, in a particular animadvertence, and express thinking upon what we know*; which is *consideration.*

Both these are necessary to a *chosen sin*; for we must both *know* an action to be a sin, and also actually *bethink* our selves, and *consider* of its sinfulness, before we can be said to *chuse* the sin, and *wilfully* to disobey in it.

1. Before we can be said to *chuse* the sinfulness of any action, it is necessary that we *know habitually* and in the *general*, that the action, whensoever it is committed, is *sinful.*

I call that an *habitual* and *general knowledge*, when *we are not to learn of any sinful action that there is a Law*

that

that forbids it, nor are in any doubts or darkneſs in our own thoughts whether it be a ſin, or no. But if it is propoſed to our minds, they are already reſolved about it, and need not further to enquire of it; they know and judge it to be a ſin when they are asked the queſtion, and that is their ſtanding opinion and fixt perſwaſion. And this *knowledge*, becauſe it is no more of *one* particular action than of *another*, I call *general*; and becauſe it is *fixt* and *permanent*, having grown into a laſting impreſſion and habitual judgment of the mind, I call an *habitual knowledge*.

Now that we may be ſaid to chuſe to ſin and diſobey in any particular action, it is neceſſary that we have this general and habitual knowledge of its ſinfulneſs. For if we do not underſtand that, although we do chuſe the *action*, yet we cannot be eſteemed to chuſe the *ſin*, ſince our will may be all the while innocent and obedient, and ready to refuſe the action, if it were made to ſee that it is ſinful. We can have no choice of that, whereof we have no apprehenſion; for the will, as it is truly ſaid, is a blind faculty, and can chuſe nothing till it be repreſented, and propoſed to it by the underſtanding. So that if our minds are in darkneſs about any action, and have no knowledge of its being forbidden; our wills can have no ſhare in chuſing of the ſin, but ſince it was unknown, it muſt be alſo involuntary and unchoſen.

But beſides this *general*, and *habitual knowledge* of the ſinfulneſs of any action; there is moreover neceſſarily required to our choice of it,

2. An *actual uſe* and *exerciſe of that knowledge*, in a *particular animadvertence*, and *expreſs thinking upon what we know*, which is *conſideration*. For there is no knowledge that directs and influences our choice, further than we actually attend to it, and conſider of it; but

if

if at any time we did not think of it, it is all one as if we did not know it. Nothing is a motive to our will, further than it is heeded and attended to at the time of willing; and unleſs we ſee and conſider of it *then*, when we are to chuſe upon it. For in this Caſe the *Civilians* Maxim is very true, * *That which doth not appear to be, is of no more account than if really it were not at all.*

* *Non apparentis, & non exiſtentis, eadem eſt ratio.*

That any ſin then may be ſaid to be willed and choſen by us, it is neceſſary that it occur to our thoughts, and be preſent to our minds at the time of chuſing of it. For if we tranſgreſs when we do not think of it, our heart may be innocent all the while, and our will incur no diſobedience at all, ſince if we did but conſider of the ſin, we would by no means embrace, but utterly refuſe it. So that all that can be charged upon us in ſuch Caſes, is only the *haſt* and *errour* of our *underſtandings*, but not any *rebellion* in our *wills*; for our heart is good, although the outward action appear to be evil.

Now ſince both a *general knowledge*, and a *particular conſideration*, are neceſſary in every *wilful* and *choſen ſin*; the involuntarineſs of any tranſgreſſions may ariſe from the want of *either* of them. So that thoſe ſins are juſtly reputed to be involuntary and unchoſen, which proceed,

1. From the *want of the general knowledge*, as in all ſins of *ignorance*.

2. From the *want of particular animadvertence*, as in all ſins of *inconſideration*.

1. The firſt Cauſe of an *innocent* and *pardonable involuntarineſs*, is *ignorance of our Duty*; when we venture to do what God forbids, becauſe we do not know that he has forbidden it.

And this ignorance may enter upon two accounts, either,

First, From our *ignorance*, or *miſtake of the Law it ſelf*,

ſelf, when we know not that God has made any ſuch Law, as our preſent action is a tranſgreſſion of. Or,

Secondly, From our *ignorance*, or *miſtake of the thing it ſelf, which the Law enjoins or forbids*, when we know not that our preſent action comes under that, which in the known Law is enjoined, or forbidden.

Thus, for inſtance, a man may ſin by *backbiting, cenſoriouſneſs*, &c. either becauſe he knows not that backbiting and cenſoriouſneſs are *things prohibited*; or becauſe he knows not, that *what he doth* is cenſuring and backbiting. And either way the error may be confined to his underſtanding, and the tranſgreſſion be no where elſe but in his mind, but may not reach his heart or will at all. For he would neither utter the *backbiting* nor *cenſorious* word, if he knew that it were againſt God's will; but for this very reaſon he ventures on them, becauſe he knows not that *actions of that kind are forbidden*, or that *his is of that forbidden kind of actions*.

Firſt, The *firſt* ſort of *ignorance*, which can effect an *innocent involuntarineſs*, is *our ignorance of the general Law which makes a Duty*, when we know not that God has given any ſuch Commandment, as our preſent action is a tranſgreſſion of.

All the Laws of Chriſt are not known by every man, but ſome are ignorant of one or other of them. Nay there is no man, how perfect ſoever his knowledge of them be at preſent, but at ſome time he did not know them. He had a time of learning, before he attained to a compleat underſtanding of them. For our knowledge of them, as of all things elſe, is *gradual*; it goes on by ſteps, and from the notice of one, proceeds to the notice of another. So that even the *wiſe* and *learned* themſelves, do not at all times ſee all thoſe things which Chriſt has required of them, but paſs through a

a long time of ignorance, before they arrive at that pitch of compleat knowledge.

But then there are others, who have neither *abilities*, nor *opportunities* to know every particular Law of Christ in a longer time, nor some, it may be, in their whole lives. For how many men are there in the world whose understanding is slow, and who come to apprehend things with great difficulty? And as their faculties are narrow, so are their opportunities very small. For although they are most heartily willing and desirous to see all that God has required of them, that they may keep and practise it; yet their *education* has been so poor, that they cannot read it; the *place* which Gods Providence has allotted for them, is so destitute, that they are far from them who should instruct them in it; their *condition* in the world is so subject and dependant, that they have little time and leisure of their own wherein to seek instruction; and their *apprehensions* are so slow, and their *memories* so frail, that it is not much of it at a time which they can retain, when they have got the freedom of it. They are *servants*, or *poor men*, and must be working for their bodily maintenance, when they should be in search of spiritual Doctrine.

Indeed through the infinite goodness and gracious Providence of God, it seldom happens, if at all, that they who have *honest hearts*, which stand ready and prepared to obey his Laws, in *Christian Countries* live long without the means of understanding them. For, although they themselves cannot read; yet, if they desire it, and seek after it, they cannot miss of *Christian people*, and of *Christian Guides*, who will be most ready and willing to instruct them. So that no man amongst them, whose heart is first desirous of it, can ever be supposed to want all opportunities of coming to the knowledge of his Duty.

But

But then we muſt conſider, that *knowledge of our Duty* is a word of a *great latitude*, and has many *parts* and *degrees* in it. For our Duty takes up a great compaſs, no leſs than all the *particular Laws*, which are contained under the *general Precepts* of *Piety*, *Sobriety*, *Juſtice*, *Charity*, *Peaceableneſs*. And although every mans opportunities will ſerve him to know *ſome*, and to underſtand the moſt *general* and *comprehenſive*; yet will they not enable him to underſtand *all*. Our whole Duty, 'tis true, both towards *God* and *men*, is comprehended in that *one* Law of *Love*, which, as St. *Paul* ſays, is the *fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13.10. So that if every man had but the *wit* and *parts*, the *time* and *leiſure* to make deductions, and to run this general Law into as many particular inſtances and expreſſions as it would reach to, in the knowledge of that one Law, which is ſoon learned, he might have it within his own power when he would to underſtand all the reſt, which are contained within the compaſs of thoſe *two* great Branches, and general Heads of Duty. But alas! it is not every *common head*, no nor very *many* even of the *wiſe* and *learned*, who are ſo *quick* and *ready*, ſo *full* and *comprehenſive*, in making inferences. But they have need to be ſhowed the particulars, and are not able of themſelves to collect them, by a tedious, and comprehenſive train of conſequences. So that even when they have learned their obligation to the moſt *material*, and *general* Precepts of the Goſpel; yet may there be ſeveral Particular ones ſtill remaining, which not only the poor and ignorant, but they alſo, who think themſelves to be more wiſe and learned, do not ſee, and take themſelves to be obliged by.

As for the crying ſins of *Perjury*, *Adultery*, *Murther*, *Theft*, *Oppreſſion*, *Lying*, *Slander*, and the like, which even *natural Conſcience*, without the aſſiſtance and in-

ſtruction of *Chriſt*'s *Goſpel*, would be afraid of; theſe, 'tis true, no man, who is grown up to years of *common reaſon* and *diſcretion*, can be ignorant of, and yet be innocent. But then beſides *theſe*, there are many other ſins which are not of ſo *black a Die*, or of ſo *miſchievous a Nature*, which many of them who profeſs the Goſpel, through the *littleneſs of their abilities*, their *leiſure*, or *opportunities*, do not underſtand to be ſinful. Their Conſciences are not afraid of them, nor check them either before, or after they have committed them. For how many are there of the Profeſſors of Chriſt's Religion, who never think of being called to an account for *laſciviouſneſs* and *uncleanneſs*, for *paſſionateneſs* and *uncourteouſneſs*, for *backbiting* and *cenſorioúſneſs*, for *diſturbing the publick peace*, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, for *not ſpeaking well of an enemy*, or *not praying for him*, or for the like Breaches of ſeveral other particular Laws of Chriſt's Goſpel, whereby at the laſt Day we muſt all be judged? Alas! they know not of any ſuch Laws, nor ever think of being tryed by them. In the Goſpel, 'tis very true, they are all *recorded*, and by Chriſts *Miniſters* at one time or other they are all *proclaimed*, and by *ſome exemplary good men*, although God knows they are very few, in one place or other they are duly *practiſed*; but yet for all this a great many Chriſtian men are ignorant of ſome or other of them. For either they cannot read the Scriptures where they are mentioned, or they have not opportunity to hear the Preacher when every one of them particularly is taught, or they are not in ſight and obſervation of thoſe patterns of piety by whom they are practiſed; ſo that ſtill they do not underſtand them. Or if at laſt they do come to know them, yet is it ſome time firſt, and they acted ſeveral times againſt them, before they ſaw that they were bound by them.

So

So that ſtill we ſee there is room in the World for *ſins of ignorance*, from mens *not knowing of the Law* which they ſin againſt. *Several* particular Laws, which lie more *remote*, and are not ſo *plainly* of *natural* obligation, nor ſtartled at by *natural* Conſcience, are *oftentimes*, and by *many perſons* tranſgreſſed, becauſe they do not perceive themſelves to be bound by them.

And as for this ignorance of one Branch or other of their Duty, it is ſome mens *unhappineſs* rather than their *fault*; they do not ſo truly chuſe it, as through an unchoſen neceſſity fall under it. For it is neceſſary to *all* people, whether they will or no, for *ſome* time; and to *ſome*, for *all their lives*.

It is neceſſary, I ſay, to *all people*, whether they will or no, for *ſome time*. For by the very conſtitution of our Nature, which is before any thing of our own chuſing, we are born ignorant: the mind of man being, as *Ariſtotle* compares it, like a *blank paper*, wherein is nothing written. No man ever ſince *Adam* came into the World in the free exerciſe of his underſtanding, and with his perfect wits about him. And when after ſome time we do *begin* to know, yet even then is all our knowledge *gradual*, and by little and little. For we firſt learn one thing, and then another, and ſo by ſeveral ſteps attain at laſt to a competent pitch of knowledge. When therefore any man doth begin to know Gods will, and to diſcern his Laws; yet is it not poſſible that he ſhould underſtand them all at once: but ſome of them every man muſt needs be ignorant of, till he has had time to learn and know them all.

To *ſome* people, I ſay, it is neceſſary for their *whole lives*, to their dying Day they do not arrive to the underſtanding of ſome things, which God has required of them. And that becauſe they wanted either *abilities*, or *opportunities*, neither of which is of their own chuſing.

ſing. They are of a *ſlow underſtanding*, and have not thoſe *means of inſtruction*, or that *time* and *leiſure* to attend upon it, which others have. And that by reaſon of their *place* and *low condition* in the world, wherein it was Gods pleaſure, and not their own, to diſpoſe of them.

But now this ignorance of ſome or other of Chriſt's Laws, being thus *involuntary*, it muſt likewiſe be *innocent*. For there is no damning ſin and diſobedience but in our own choice; ſo that as long as the heart is true to God, he will not be at enmity for any thing elſe which may ſeem to be againſt him.

And ſince our *ignorance* it ſelf is *innocent*, the *ſinning* upon it will never be *rebellious* and *damning*. For the diſobedience is not any way choſen, neither in it ſelf nor in its Cauſe; we do not chuſe the ſin, becauſe we do not ſee that the action is ſinful, nor do we chuſe not to ſee it, becauſe we cannot help it. But where there is no choice, there will be there no condemnation. So that the action which is done againſt the Law, ſhall not be puniſhed by the Law, if we were thus innocently ignorant of the Law whereof it was a tranſgreſſion.

And that it will not, is plain. For God never did, nor ever will condemn any man for the tranſgreſſion of a particular Law, before he has had all due means and neceſſary opportunities, ſuch as may be *ſufficient* to any *honeſt* and *willing* heart, to underſtand it. The *Jewiſh* Law obliged none but thoſe whom it was proclaimed to, who had the advantages of being inſtructed out of it. It is *they* only, ſays St. *Paul*, *who have ſinned in* or under *the Law*, *who ſhall be judged by the Law*, Rom. 2. 12. The *Law* of *Chriſt* did not bind men, until they had *ſufficient means* and *opportunities* of knowing it, and being convinced by it. *If ye were blind*, or wanted abilities, ſays our Saviour to the Phariſees, *you ſhould have*

Rom. 5. 13.

have no ſin, John 9. 41. And again, *if I had not* given them ſufficient opportunities of knowing, *come, and ſpoken unto them, they had not had ſin*; *but now* ſince I have, *they have no cloak*, or no * pretence or excuſe *for their ſin*. Nay, *if I had not* given them all due means of conviction, and *done among them works which no other man hath done, they had not had ſin ſtill*, John 15. 22, 24.

* προφασιν.

Theſe ſlips of honeſt ignorance of our Duty are no more puniſhed under the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*, than they were under the *Law* of *Moſes*. For *Chriſt* our *High Prieſt* doth attone for them by virtue of his *Sacrifice of himſelf*, as well as the *Aaronical Prieſt*, in behalf of the ignorantly offending *Jews*, made an attonement for them by his *ſin-offering*, Levit. 4. 2, 3, &c. This St. *Paul* tells us, in his compariſon of *Chriſt*'s Prieſthood, with that of the *line of Aaron*. In his *interceding to God*, and *offering Sacrifice for ſins, he can have compaſſion on the ignorant*, Heb. 5. 2.

Ignorance therefore of the *general Law* which makes any thing a Duty, ſo long as it is not *wilful* and *affected* by us, through the *merits* of *Chriſt's Sacrifice*, and the *Grace* of his *Goſpel*, renders thoſe offences, which we commit under it, pardonable tranſgreſſions; ſuch as do not deſtroy a ſtate of Grace, but conſiſt with it.

And this is the very determination, which St. *Cyprian* gives in the Caſe of *tranſgreſſing our Lords inſtitution*, in the participation of the *Lords Supper*. For ſome *Churches* in thoſe Days were wont to make uſe of *Water* inſtead of *Wine*, in which way of communicating ſeveral of them had been educated and brought up, having received it *ignorantly* and in the *ſimplicity* of their hearts, as they had done other things of their Religion, from the *practice* and *tradition* of their *Fore-fathers*.

fathers. Now as for the usage it self, St. *Cyprian* declares plainly that it is a *breach of Duty*, and a *custom* very *dangerous* and *sinful*. * *It is*, says he, *against our Lords Command, who plainly bid us do what he did*; i.e. *make use of bread and wine, which were those things that he used.* † *The blood of Christ is not offered, if there be no wine in the cup to represent it; and how can we ever hope to drink wine with him in his Fathers Kingdom, if we drink it not at his Table here on Earth?* So that in the good Fathers judgment, the *Duty* was *express*, the *Law binding*, and the *transgression dangerous*. But yet as for those innocent and well-meaning souls, who had no opportunity to be told of it, but were bred up in a contrary way, under the authority of a tradition that opposed it, and therefore in the simplicity of their hearts were ignorant of it: * *They*, says he, even whilst they do transgress, shall go unpunished. *Their simplicity and ignorance shall excuse them, whilst our knowledge will certainly condemn us; they shall be pardoned, because they could not know it, but we shall be punished, because, when we might have known and kept it, if we would, we neglected and despised it. In the mean time herein is Gods great mercy shown to us, and for this should we return most hearty thanks to him, that even now, when he plainly instructs us in that, which under pain of his displeasure we are to do hereafter; he, at the same time, pardons us for all that, which through simplicity and honest ignorance we have already done.*

* *Invenimus non à nobis observari quod mandatum est, nisi eadem quæ Dominus fecit, nos quoque faciamus, & calicem pari ratione miscentes à Divino magisterio non recedamus.*

† *Apparet sanguinen Christi non offerri, si deest vinum calici, nec Sacrificium Domini cum legitima Sanctificatione celebrari, nisi Oblatio & Sacrificium nostrum respondevit Passioni. Quomodo olim de Creatura vitis novum vinum cum Christo in Regno Patris bibemus, si in Sacrificio Dei Patris & Christi vinum non offerimus, nec calicem Domini Dominica traditione miscemus?*

* *Siquis de antecessoribus nostris vel ignoranter, vel simpliciter non hoc observavit ac tenuit, quod nos Dominus facere exemplo & magisterio suo docuit: potest simplicitati ejus de indulgentia Domini venia concedi; nobis vero non poterit ignosci, qui nunc à Domino admoniti & instructi sumus ut calicem Dominicum vino mixtum, secundum quod Dominus obtulit, offeramus. —— agentes gratias quod dum instruit de futuro quid facere debeamus; de præterito ignoscit quod simpliciter erravimus.* Cypr. Ep. ad Cæcil. quæ est Ed. Rigalt. 63.

And

And as this *innocent unwill'd ignorance of the Law it ſelf* excuſes all thoſe tranſgreſſions, which we incur by reaſon of it; ſo doth

2. The *ſecond* ſort of ignorance, (*viz.*) the *ignorance of the thing it ſelf which the Law injoyns or forbids*, when we know not that our preſent action is included in it, or meant by it.

Gods Laws, as all others, run in *general terms*, and never go to reckon up all particular actions which are with them or againſt them, but leave the judging and diſcerning of that to our own ſelves. He tells us that *theft* and *revenge* are ſinful, but leaves us to inform our ſelves what *actions* are *thieviſh* and *revengeful*. He teaches us that *Covetouſneſs* is forbidden, but he puts us to ſee of the action before us that it be *covetous*; and the ſame he doth in every other Law. For that which he expreſly mentions, is the *general name* of the action which he forbids; but as for the *particular application*, he leaves that to our own ſelves.

Now here is the wide place for the *ignorance*, and *errours* of all ſorts of men. For what *Arrian* ſays of *happineſs* and *miſery*, is equally true of *ſin* and *duty*: * *in the application of the acknowledged notion, or law, to particular things, or actions, is the cauſe of all our evils: here the great ſcene of ignorance in morals, the field of doubting and diſpute lies.* The great controverſies which men have, either in their *own thoughts*, or with *Gods miniſters*, is not ſo much whether *evil-ſpeaking*, *back-biting*, *cenſoriouſneſs*, *unpeaceableneſs*, *drunkenneſs*, *ſenſuality*, or any ſuch prohibited vice be a ſin. For as to that the Law is expreſs, the very word is mentioned in it, and he that reads or hears the Law, if he attend to what he reads or hears, cannot but obſerve and underſtand it. But the great doubt is, whether *this* or *that* particular action, which they are about to commit, be indeed a

* τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ αἴτιον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πάντων τῶν κακῶν, τὸ τὰς προλήψεις τὰς κοινὰς μὴ δύνασθαι ἐφαρμόζειν ταῖς ἐπὶ μέρους. Arrian. Comment. in Epict. lib. 3. cap. 26.

cenſorious, an *unpeaceable*, a *ſenſual*, or a *drunken* action.

And the Reaſons of this are ſeveral. For,

1. In ſome actions, although we know the *general Law*, yet we know not whether the *particular* action be comprehended under it; becauſe *what is forbidden in the Law differs from what is innocent, not in kind, but only in degree.* For a great part of our *appetites* and *actions* are neither determined to good nor ill in their *whole nature*, but only as they are in *certain meaſures.* The uſe of *meats* and *drinks* within due bounds is *harmleſs*, but beyond that 'tis *intemperance*; the deſire and ſearch of *money* in a moderate degree is *lawful*, but above that 'tis *Covetouſneſs*; the modeſt purſute of *honour* and *promotion* is *innocent*, but when it exceeds, it is *ambition*; to have *juſt* thoughts of a mans ſelf is *allowable*, but to be puffed up with over-high conceits is *pride*; and ſo it is in ſeveral other inſtances. A great many *paſſions* and *actions* are not always ſinful, but ſo far only as they are *deficient* or *exceed.* Which holding true of ſeveral virtues and vices, made *Ariſtotle* lay it down as a part of the nature of virtue in general, that it is ſomething *conſiſting in* * *mediocrity*; and agreeably that vice is ſomething conſiſting in *defectiveneſs* or *exceſs.*

* Ἔστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ ἕξις ἐν μεσότητι οὖσα, &c. Ariſt. Eth. ad Nicom. l. 2. c. 6.

Now the actions which are prohibited by ſeveral Laws, not coming under the compaſs of the Laws in their whole natures, but only when they are arrived to certain meaſures and degrees; herein, after we have known the general Law, lies the difficulty and unreſolvedneſs, whether or no the preſent action falls under it. For it is a very *hard* thing, and, it may be, *impoſſible* to any human underſtanding, to fix the exact bounds and utmoſt limits of virtue and vice, to draw a line preciſely between them, and tell to a tittle how many degrees are innocent, and the juſt place where

where the exceſs begins. Here the *Wiſe* and *Learned* themſelves are at a loſs, and much more the *rude* and ignorant; ſo that in Laws of this nature, they may many times miſtake their ſin for their liberty and allowance, and go beyond the innocent degree, when they do not know it.

2. In other actions, although we do know the *general* Law, yet many times we are ignorant of the preſent actions being comprehended under it, becauſe *the Law is not abſolute and unlimited, but admits of ſeveral exceptions*, whereof we may miſtake the preſent action to be one.

The *great* and *general* Laws of Chriſt, as of any other Legiſlator, have *ſeveral caſes* which are *not included* in the *general name* of the *duty* injoyned or of the *ſin* prohibited in the Law, but are *exempt* from it. What Duty is injoyned in more univerſal words, than that of *Peace*? but yet in ſeveral caſes we not only *may*, but out of Duty *muſt* nouriſh *contention*: For we are bid to *contend earneſtly for the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*, Jud. *verſ.* 3. We muſt be concerned for *God* and *Religion*, when others concern themſelves againſt them. We are not *tamely* and *unaffectedly* to ſee *Gods Laws* cancelled, or our *countries peace* diſturbed; but muſt ſtrive and contend with as much *wiſe zeal* and *active courage*, and with infinitely more *honour* and *peace of mind*, to *maintain* and *defend*, than ill men do to *oppoſe* and *deſtroy* them. Again, what Law is delivered in fuller and plainer terms, than that of *forgiving injuries*? but yet there are ſeveral caſes wherein we may juſtly *ſeek amends* for them. For we may bring a *malefactor* to condign puniſhment, or an *injurious* man to reſtitution; and the like is obſervable of other Laws.

Now thoſe actions which come under the general

name of the sin prohibited, not being forbidden universally, but some being excepted; here again is room for ignorance and mistake about the particular action, after we have known the general Duty. For we may take that to be a case excepted, which is indeed a case prohibited; and venture upon an action as an exempted liberty, which in truth and reality is a forbidden sin.

3. In other actions, although we know the *general Law*, yet many times we are in ignorance about the *particular action*, because there are *several actions which are not directly forbidden by any Law, but are always innocent and indifferent, unless when some Law takes hold of them indirectly.* The action is usually allowed, except when it is committed in such a manner, as that the transgression of some Law accompanies it. There is no Law against it self, but only against some thing that is annexed to it. For God has not given a *particular Law* for every sort of actions, but has left us in several to govern our selves by other *motives* and *inducements*, *viz.* of *pleasure*, *honour*, or *interest*, and not by virtue of a Commandment. But although these unrestrained actions are no matter of a particular Law, which expresly names them, and directly binds us up to one side, either in chusing, or refusing the *whole kind* of them: yet in our use and exercise of them, they may at one time or other fall under the power of several. For, to illustrate this by an instance, there is no Law which directly and expresly, either enjoyns or forbids us to *play at cards*, or other *pastime*; but yet several Laws commanding or forbidding other things, may be transgressed in our use of them. For even in a game at *cards* we may incur the sin of *Covetousness*, by our desire of money; the sin of *Injustice*, by our endeavours to cheat and cozen; and the sins of *passionateness*, *impatience*, and *unpeaceableness*, by

by our repining at our ill luck, our quarrelling, and contending; and the like might be ſhewn in other caſes.

Now ſeeing ſeveral actions, which in themſelves are thus innocent, and under no Law; may yet at one time or other, by reaſon of ſome thing concomitant, and annexed to them, be indirectly a tranſgreſſion of a Law: here is ſtill a further reaſon, why, when we know the general Law, we yet are ignorant of our preſent actions being forbid by it. For the Law doth not look upon it directly, but takes a compaſs before it comprehends it. They lie not in the ſame line, and ſo one may be particularly ſeen and conſidered of, and much more known and underſtood in the general, without ſeeing of the other.

4. In other actions, although we know the General Law which we ſin againſt, yet we do not believe that our preſent action is included in it, or forbid by it, becauſe *another Law happens to claſh with it in ſome inſtance, and ſeems to injoyn and juſtifie what we do, although that be tranſgreſſed by it.* For it often happens in a Chriſtians Life that two Laws interfere, and command differently in the ſame inſtance. Our Duty is at variance with it ſelf, ſo that when we purſue obedience in one particular, another is diſobeyed by us. How obvious and uſual is it for him, who would avoid the *paſſion* and *impatience of diſcourſe*, to fall into a fault of the oppoſite extream, by *ſullenneſs* and *unſociable moroſeneſs*? What is more common than for men to be over-*cenſorious* and *troubleſomly rigid in converſation*, who aim at nothing but to be *ſeverely virtuous*, and *piouſly auſtere*? It is an obvious errour for any, whilſt they intend a *charitable feaſting*, to run into ſome *ſmall intemperance*; for *inoffenſiveneſs* and *kind compliance*, to juſtle out the due *ſeverities* of *reproof*; for *ſeverity* to exceed

ceed into *ungentleneſs*, for *affection* to degenerate into *fondneſs*; and, which is the great inſtance of errour upon this ſcore, for our *zeal* for *God* to diſturb the *peace*, and tranſgreſs the bounds of *charity* towards *men*.

I do not mean ſuch *zeal* as tranſgreſſes *notorious* and weighty *Laws*, for *diſputable*, nay, even for *clear* and *evident Doctrines* and *Opinions*. A zeal that will ſtick at nothing, but burſts through all Gods Commands to propagate an Article, and ventures upon *murders*, *tumults*, *lying*, *ſlander*, *wars*, *blood-ſhed*, and other inſtances of a moſt notorious and damning diſobedience in practice, to promote an Orthodox belief. For theſe are ſuch inſtances of offence, as no *honeſt heart* can overlook; but if a man has not *debauched his Conſcience*, they muſt needs appear to be of a *frightful guilt*, and of a *damning nature*. Any *virtuous temper* muſt abhor, and every *good conſcience* utterly condemn them. So that no man of an honeſt and obedient heart can ever hope to ſerve God by them, or think any pretence whatſoever of force enough to juſtifie the practice of them.

But then there are other ſins, which are of a *ſmaller guilt*, or of a *more alterable nature*, ſuch as either are not *greatly*, or not *always evil*; but only when they happen to have *ill effects*, or are in an *exorbitant degree*: and theſe an *eager zeal* doth many times drive men to, and they think all is obedience, even when they proceed ſo far in them as to diſobey. Mens *zeal* for thoſe *Opinions which they account Religious*, tranſports them daily into *eſtrangedneſs of mind*, and *fierceneſs of behaviour*, into *paſſionate diſputes*, and *diſparaging reflections*, into *animoſities*, and *diſquietneſs*, and a great *breach* of *mutual charity* and *love*. And all theſe, though really they are breaches of their Duty, are looked upon as *innocent*, nay, *praiſe-worthy*; they judge them to come from an honeſt Principle, and therefore doubt not but that they will

will end in an happy reward. The duty of pious zeal is the spring, although it contract much of human passion in the passage; and that they hope will be acceptable to God, which goes under cover of a Commandment, and comes to serve him.

And this was the case in that *hot* and *sinful conteſt*, which happened betwixt those two great lights of Virtue and Learning, *Epiphanius* and *Chryſoſtome*. For it was a *zeal for publick good*, and againſt ſuch things as were likely, in their opinion, to *corrupt the Faith*, or *diſturb the Peace*, or *pervert the practice* of the *Church*, which tranſported them into that warm contention, that ended in an uncharitable breach and paſſionate imprecation; when * *Epiphanius* wrote to *Chryſoſtome*, *That he hoped he would loſe his See, and never die a Biſhop*; and Cryſoſtome *replyed to him, that he hoped he would come to an untimely end, and never return ſafe into his own city.*

* ἐγὼ δὲ διαφέρομαι, ὁ μὲ ἐθέλων ἰωάννην, ἐλπίζω σὲ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν ἐπισκοπον· ὁ δ' ἰωάννης ἀντεθέλων, καὶ ἐγώ σε τῆς σῆς ἐπισκοπῆς πέσειν. Sozom. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 8. c. 15. Another inſtance of this we have in *Tertullian*, who through a Zeal for a ſevere virtue, which he thought was more ſtrictly injoyn'd among the *Montaniſts* than the *Catholicks*, was erroneouſly inſnared into the *Montaniſts ſeparation*, and into a ſinful neglect of the *Catholick Communion*. Concerning whoſe Opinions, which led him into that criminal breach, *Rigaltius* ſays thus, ——*Hæreſes Tertulliani quæ dicuntur, eæ vix aliud præcipiebant quam martyria fortiora, jejunia ſiccora, caſtimoniam ſanctiorem, nuptias ſcilicet unas aut nullas. In quibus quicquid peccarit, id omne virtutis amore vehementiore peccaſſe videatur.* Rigalt. Obſerv. in lib. Tertull. ad Praxeam.

And a real tranſgreſſion of one Law being thus, through the claſhing and enterfering of two Laws of Chriſt, in fair appearance an act of laudable and neceſſary obedience to another: Here again is a further reaſon, why, when we know the Law which we ſin againſt, we yet think that our action is not ſinful, becauſe we take it to be juſtified, nay, what is more, commanded by another.

5. In other actions, although we know the *General Law* which is tranſgreſſed, yet we take our *preſent action* not to be comprized under it, becauſe of ſome *prejudices*

judices which exempt it. There is oft-times a clashing and enterfering of Laws and Opinions, as well as of one Law with another. For men entertain several perswasions which are inconsistent with some instances of Duty, and that make them look upon themselves in those cases not to be obliged by them. Their Opinion justifies one thing, when the Law commands another; it contracts its force, and evacuates its obligation; and makes them venture confidently upon several actions, whereby the Law is transgressed, by making them first to believe that in those actions they are not obliged by it.

And because this is so universal a cause of Ignorance and Errour, and so powerful in making men both overlook Gods plain Laws, and, even whilst they consider of them, evacuate and undermine them; I think it very needful to be more full in its explication, and shall therefore state it more largely in the *next* Chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Of Prejudice.

The Contents.

The nature of Prejudice. It a cause of Ignorance of our Duty. The difference betwixt things being proposed to a free and empty, and to a prejudiced or prepossessed mind. An evident proposal sufficient to make a free mind understand its duty; but besides it, a confutation of its repugnant prejudice is necessary to a mind that is prepossessed. An account of several Opinions which make

make men ignorant of ſeveral inſtances of Duty. One prejudice, that nothing is lawful in Gods worſhip, but what is authorized by an expreſs command, or example of Scripture; the acts of ſin that are juſtified by this prejudice. Another, that all private men are publick protectors of Religion, and the Chriſtian Faith; the acts of ſin juſtified by this Opinion. Other Opinions cauſe a ſinful neglect of the Sacraments. Theſe are incident to ſome honeſt and obedient hearts. An account of other prejudices, as that Chriſt is a Temporal King; the acts of diſobedience authorized by this Opinion. That a good end will juſtifie an evil action; the acts of ſin upon this perſwaſion. That Dominion is founded in Grace; the diſobedient acts avow'd by this Principle. Theſe are more diſobedient and damning. The caſe ſtated, what prejudices are conſiſtent with, and what deſtroy ſalvation. Some prejudices get into mens minds, not through a diſobedient heart, but through weakneſs of underſtanding, and fallibility of the means of knowledge. Theſe are conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation. An inſtance of this in the prejudice of the Apoſtles about preaching of the Goſpel to all Nations. Other prejudices get into mens minds through damning luſts or ſins. A brief account of the influence of mens luſts and vices upon their Opinions. This is illuſtrated in the Gnoſticks. They were famous for covetouſneſs, and worldly compliances; and for impure luſts, and exceſs in bodily pleaſures. The effect of theſe in producing agreeable Opinions. Another of their vices was a turbulent and ſeditious humour. Their Opinion was anſwerable. A further illuſtration of it from the Phariſees. An account of their vices, and the influence which they had in begetting vile perſwaſions. This influence of mens luſts upon their judgments proved from the Scriptures. The damnableneſs of ſuch prejudices as enter

this way. Certain marks whereby to judge when prejudices proceed from unmortified lusts. As firſt, *If the ſin whereto the prejudice ſerves, is unmortified in them.* Secondly, *If it lye ſo near to the prejudice, that we could not but ſee that it miniſtred to it, when we embraced it.* Thirdly, *Though it lie more remote, if we ſtill adhere to it when we plainly ſee that ſome unqueſtionable and notorious Laws are evacuated, or infringed by it. A Rule to prevent diſobedient prejudices*; viz. *Let Laws be the Rule whereby to judge of truth in opinions, not opinions the Rule whereby to meaſure the Obligation of Laws. Some Reaſons of this*, viz. *Becauſe Laws are more plain and certain, but opinions are more difficult and dubious: Obedience to Laws is the end of revealed truth, and ſo fit to meaſure it, not to be meaſured by it.*

A Prejudice is a *falſe Principle*, or *ſuch a former falſe Judgement, whereby we afterwards examine and judge amiſs in others.* For all our rational judgement of things is by Principles, when we determine of the truth or falſhood of ſuch as are *ſuſpicious* and *doubtful*, by their agreeableneſs or repugnance to ſuch others, as we think are *true* and *certain*. So that thoſe opinions, which firſt take poſſeſſion of our minds, are the *Rules* and *Standards* which all others, that ſeek to enter after, muſt be tryed by.

And if theſe anticipations of Judgment are *true* and *ſolid*, if they are taken up upon good reaſon, and mature deliberation; they are right *Maxims of knowledge*, and *Principles of underſtanding*. But if they are *falſe* and *faulty*, and entertain'd upon weak grounds, through haſte and raſhneſs; they are *falſe Rules* and *Principles of errour*. And becauſe they *hinder us in our after-judgments*, making us judge amiſs of things, as they needs muſt who judge

judge according to a falſe meaſure, they are called *prejudices.*

And theſe are a moſt *general* Cauſe of the errours and ignorances of men. For we are ignorant many times of our Duty, and miſtake a ſinful action for a lawful liberty, when no want of plainneſs in God's revelations, or in the nature of Vertues and Vices, nor any want of opportunity to be told of them; but ſome of theſe hindrances of our own minds are the cauſes of our ignorance. Thoſe very Duties, which are brought clear and open to our underſtandings, are ſometimes either *not at all,* or very *maimedly* and *imperfectly* underſtood, becauſe our minds are blocked up by a contrary belief, which makes us not to attend to them, but either wholly to overlook, or in great meaſure to evacuate and undermine them. Our prejudice has got poſſeſſion of our ſouls, and ſuffers not even a plain and clear Duty to be entertained if it makes againſt it, but either throws it out all, or pares off ſo much of it as is inconſiſtent with it. For one errour begets another in *practice,* as well as in *ſpeculation*; ſo that if we have an erroneous belief, which contradicts our Duty; it is but rational that we ſhould erroneouſly evacuate or impair our Duty likewiſe. So long therefore as the prejudice is entertained, if the Duty be never ſo plainly expreſſed, or loudly propoſed to our minds, it muſt needs be excluded, or only ſo much of it gain our notice and belief, as doth not thwart the prejudice, but agrees with it.

To underſtand this we are to take notice, that any Truths or Duties, which are propoſed to our underſtandings, have a very different ſucceſs when they are offered to a *free* and *empty,* from what they have when they are propoſed to a *prejudiced* and *prepoſſeſſed* mind. For with the *former* any Duty is ſufficiently qualified

to beget a right understanding and belief, if it be *plainly and in clear words proposed to them*; but with the *latter* a plain proposal is not enough, but besides that, there is need withal of a *confutation of the erroneous prejudices which make against it.*

1. To a mind that is *open* and *free*, not incensed by any repugnant lust, nor misled by any contrary opinion; *nothing more is needful to make it understand and believe its Duty, than to have a revelation of it from God in plain words, and a clear and evident proposal.* For such men are ready and willing, not only to hear and believe what God says, but also to take his meaning from the obvious and simple sence of *his own words*, and not from any agreement with their own *bye-inclinations* and *prepossessions.* They are not biassed by any lust, or made a party by any opinions which should make them lean to one sence, but are unconcerned on one side or another: and therefore they have no temptation to pervert Gods Words and misinterpret them, and to make them speak, not what according to their usual and open sence they should, but what, to gratifie their private lusts or opinions, they wish they might do Their minds in themselves are free to any impression, and wait for the plain and simple meaning of such expressions as God shall use to determine them. So that he need do nothing more to give them a right apprehension of his will, than to utter it in such *plain*, and *intelligible words*, as in their *usual* and *obvious* sence are expressive of it. A plain and clear proposal then of any Duty, is sufficient to make these ingenuously honest, and free minds to understand it; and nothing is a greater Argument that the expressions wherein our Duty is revealed are *ambiguous* or *obscure*, and that the proposal is *incompetent*; than that these *teachable* minds, which have nothing but the *inevidence of the revelation* to misguide them, do not rightly conceive and apprehend it. But,

But,

2. To a mind that is *prejudiced* and *prepoſſeſſed*, and, through a love to ſome former opinions and anticipations of judgment which are inconſiſtent with it, *unwilling* to underſtand and aſſent to it; a *plain and evident propoſal of any Duty is not enough: but beſides it, there is need moreover of ſilencing thoſe doubts, and confuting thoſe opinions which make againſt it.*

To ſuch minds, I ſay, a *plain expreſſion and evident propoſal of Gods will is not ſufficient to make them believe, and rightly apprehend it.* For their prejudice is a Bar againſt it, and makes them not to admit, but overlook the moſt natural and open ſence even of plain and clear expreſſions; which they do, not becauſe the words do not obviouſly expreſs, but becauſe their prejudicate opinion cannot conſiſt with it. For their own opinion they believe is true, and that in their own ſence, which, what it is, they know moſt certainly. And whilſt they do think this a truth, they cannot believe that to be a true, although never ſo plain and obvious a ſence of any other words, which convinces it of falſhood. So that in this Caſe of claſhing and contradiction between a *prejudicate opinion*, and a *new propoſal*, ſo long as the prejudice is adhered to, one of theſe *two* things muſt of neceſſity be choſen; either for the ſake of ſuch contradiction to *throw away the new propoſal*, or to *mitigate it by ſome ſence that is reconcileable to the prejudicate belief.* And if the Propoſer were any way of a *ſuſpected credit*, and a perſon liable to errour and miſtake; ſuch interfering propoſals would be rejected without more ado, and not admit of any long debate. But if the perſon who brings them be of *unqueſtionable credit*, both for the untaintedneſs of his *integrity* which cannot deceive us, and alſo for the perfection of his *knowledge*, whereby he is not ſubject to be deceived

deceived himſelf; (as God is in all thoſe truths which his Word declares, and in all thoſe Duties which his Law enjoins us) then is there no way left, if we ſtick ſtill to our opinion, but to ſeek out for ſome amicable and conſiſtent interpretation of his words, whereby they may be made to comport with it. And here the *natural defect of words*, and the *univerſal imperfection of all ſpeech* befriends us. For ſcarce any Sentence is ſo plain and full for one ſenſe, but that through the *witty arts* of ſome, and the *irregular* and *improper uſe* of others, it may be ſhown capable to ſpeak another. And that other ſence we ſhall be ſure to put upon it, although it be never ſo remote, and foreign from that true and obvious interpretation wherein God meant it. Nay, if we cannot readily fix upon it any other than the plain ſence, which claſhes with our own opinion; and yet dare not ſuſpect its truth in that ſenſe, be it what it will, wherein God intended it: yet ſo long as we are true to our prejudicate Principle, we muſt ſuſpect that it hath another, which although we cannot hit upon at preſent, yet *others*, or, at another time, it may be *we ourſelves* may. This, I ſay, we muſt do; becauſe ſo long as we think our own opinion true, we cannot judge another to be true too ſo far as it contradicts it; ſo that if for his ſake who propoſes it, we muſt eſteem it to be true likewiſe; that cannot otherwiſe be, than by ſoftening it into ſuch a ſence, as our own opinion, whereby we judge of it, can conſiſt with. As for ſuch *interfering Truths* or *Laws* then, we ſhall not interpret them by the *plain* and *obvious* ſence of thoſe words which expreſs them; but by the *conſiſtence of our own prejudicate belief*, whereby we meaſure the ſence and meaning of them.

A plain expreſſion then of any Law of God is not ſufficient to make us rightly apprehend, nor a clear propoſal

propoſal able of it ſelf to make us underſtand it againſt a prejudice, which oppoſes the plain and true ſence of it. Becauſe our prejudice, ſo long as we adhere to it, will make us reject and overlook the *plain* and *true* meaning of the Law which oppoſes it, and take up with any other *falſe* or *maimed* ſence, although it be never ſo *remote*, *improper*, or *imperfect*, which agrees with it.

But that our Duty may be owned and underſtood in its true and full meaning, 'tis neceſſary, not only that it be clearly propoſed; but alſo that our *own doubts be ſilenced*, and our *prejudicate principle confuted*, which impairs and undermines it. The true and full meaning of the Duty will not enter into our minds, till the gain-ſaying prejudice is thrown out of them. For in all our judgments of things, this is the natural and neceſſary courſe which God himſelf has ſet us; *viz. to put a ſence, or to paſs a ſentence upon any thing that is propoſed to us, according as we find it to claſh, or agree with ſuch received opinions*, and ſtandard-perſwaſions of our own minds *whereby we judge of it*. If they infer it, we approve; but if they overthrow it, we disbelieve it. For it is againſt the Laws of all *reaſoning*, and the Rules of *Argument*, and *Diſcourſe*, to *reject the plain and neceſſary conſequence of an allowed Principle*. So that till we renounce the prejudice which manifeſtly deſtroys a Law, we muſt needs evacuate, or, in great part, impair the Law which is oppoſed by it. But to make the Law be underſtood in its plain meaning, and believed in its full extent; 'tis neceſſary that the Principle be rejected which thwarts or excludes it. All our *Arguments for it* muſt be *anſwered*, or *overborn*; and all our *exceptions* either againſt the *truth*, or *fulneſs of our plain Duty*, muſt be *taken off*; and our belief muſt be won to it by *new light*, and *encreaſe of Argument*. And to conquer all our backwardneſs,

wardneſs, and ſilence all our doubts, we muſt be ſhowed that God doth indeed intend his Law in that plain and full ſence, which his own words obviouſly expreſs, but our prejudice oppoſes, by the importunity and confirmed uſe of a repeated proof and revelation.

Our *prejudices* then, or anticipated opinions, which are looked upon as great Truths and Rules of Judgement, will in all likelihood make us ignorant of ſeveral Duties, or at leaſt of ſeveral parts of Duty, which are plainly enough revealed. They will make us to overlook, either ſome *whole* Laws, or a *great part* of the *compaſs* and *extent* of them, and to think ſeveral actions to be exempt from them, which are really bound up by them. Which, I ſay, we ſhall do, becauſe we ſhall not judge of our Duty from thoſe *plain words* that expreſs it, which is certainly the ſafeſt courſe whereby to have a full ſenſe of it; but from our own *foreconceived Notions* and *Opinions*, which oftentimes, and in ſeveral inſtances and degrees, if not altogether, *evacuate* and *impair* it.

To help our apprehenſions in this *abſtract* Diſcourſe, we will look a little into the *practice of men*; and that will ſhew us plainly how bad an influence prejudices have upon their minds, in making them ignorant, either of ſeveral *Duties*, or of the ſinfulneſs of *ſeveral actions* which are reſtrained by them. For we ſhall find great numbers of men of all ſorts to have taken up ſeveral falſe opinions, which are inconſiſtent with ſome Vertues, and which make thoſe Laws that they are againſt to have no *force* at all, or very little, upon their *Conſcience*, nor any *effect* upon their *practice*. So that they miſinterpret that to be no Duty, which God has made one, and tranſgreſs *boldly* and *ſecurely*, without *fear* or *remorſe*.

For ſome, out of a certain *timerouſneſs* of mind, have entertained

entertained a wrong belief, That *nothing is lawful in God's Worſhip, but what either ſome authentick Example recorded in Scripture has approved, or ſome Command has made neceſſary.* So that when any *Law of their Governours* comes to enjoin any *Circumſtance* or *Ceremony* in Gods ſervice, which *God* and the *Scriptures* had left *indifferent*, although when once ſuch Law has paſt, the plain and known Precepts of *obedience* to *Laws*, and *ſubmiſſion* to *Governours*, of *peace*, and *unity* among *Fellow Chriſtians* enjoin it; they account the fulfilling of it to be no longer a matter of *obedience* and *Duty*, but *unlawful* and a *ſin*. For their miſtaken Notion of *things being made lawful only by ſome Example or Law that warrants them*, and not, on the contrary, being *lawful* and at *liberty antecedent to all Laws and Precedents, becauſe no Law forbids them*, is the Rule whereby they meaſure the obligation of all theſe Duties, and it plainly overthrows them. So that in a confident belief thereof they ſecurely tranſgreſs theſe Laws, and break the *unity* and diſturb the *peace* of men, thinking that they *obey God* in ſo doing.

Others have given way to a falſe opinion, that *Religion is ſo much every mans care, as that not only Kings and Governours*, whoſe *Office* and *Title* it is to be Defenders of the Faith, *but alſo every private Chriſtian ſhould contrive, and act for the publick maintenance and protection of it.* They are not content in ſecuring it to keep within their *own ſphere*, and to do what they are bound in Duty towards it as *private Chriſtians*. That is, *to pray to God earneſtly and importunately, that he would preſerve it*; and to *endeavour induſtriouſly in their own place after it*, by *their own lively and exemplary practice of it*, by *a careful inſtruction of other men in the reaſons of it*, by *exhorting them to a cloſe adherence to it*, and by *preſſing upon them all the motives of Heaven and another*

World to perſwade them to a conſcientious taking up the Croſs, when it ſhall pleaſe God to lay it in their way, and a patient and couragious ſuffering for it. When God by his Providence brings a *National Religion* into danger, theſe are the Duties whereto he calls every *private* man, and it is his *preſent honour*, and ſhall be his *immortal happineſs* conſcientiouſly to *diſcharge* it. And would they content themſelves with this, all were well and laudable. But when once they have imbibed this opinion, that they are not only *private Promoters*, but alſo *publick Contrivers* and *Protectors of the Faith*; they run beyond all theſe *private means* into a *cenſuring* of the *adminiſtration of affairs*, and the *prudence of Governours*, into endleſs *fears* and *jealouſies*, *murmurings* and *complaints*, and other inſtances of *pragmaticalneſs*, *irreverence*, and *contempt of higher Powers*, and *diſturbance* of the *publick Peace*. All theſe their Principle juſtifies, and therefore in aſſurance of it they boldly venture on them. So that although the Commands of *ſtudying to be quiet*, and to *do their own buſineſs*, againſt a *pragmatical medling* in the *affairs*, and *diſturbing* the *quiet* of other men, are expreſſed in words moſt plain and eaſily intelligible; yet do they overlook them, and in all thoſe inſtances wherein their prejudice leads them to tranſgreſs, quite evacuate all their plain force and obvious Obligation.

Some for a long time neglect the dutiful uſe of one *Sacrament*, becauſe they think that they have a pious reaſon againſt it; and many other *humble* and *well-meaning minds* omit a dutiful *participation of the other*, as ſcarce ever thinking themſelves to be ſufficiently prepared for it. Their falſe opinion carries them into their ſinful neglect; and makes them diſobey thoſe Laws which require the uſe of them, by making them firſt to think that they would offend God if they ſhould obſerve them.

Theſe

Theſe breaches of Duty, and indulged acts of ſin, *well-meaning* and *honeſtly obedient minds* are oft-times drawn into through erroneous conceits and prejudicate Opinions. For ſome men of *honeſt hearts*, and of *humble modeſt tempers*, who are ready to comply in every thing wherein their conſciences allow them, are inſnared into them, and diſobey only becauſe they judge obedience to be unlawful. And that which makes them judge ſo, is not any luſt or ſin which is harboured and unmortified in their hearts, which ſhould be miniſtred to by ſuch erroneous judgment. But the Opinion took poſſeſſion of their ſouls by the *education of their Parents*, or by the *authority* and *inſtruction of ſpiritual guides*; they imbibed it at firſt in the ſimplicity of their ſouls, and ſince that have continually been uſed to it, and bred up in it. So that although they never ſerve that ſin whereto it miniſters in other inſtances, but always fear and conſcientiouſly avoid it; yet where this prejudicate Opinion warrants it, they do.

Theſe Prejudices, I ſay, are not altogether inconſiſtent with an honeſt and obedient heart, but are *ſometimes* entertained by *innocent* and *religious men*, although *many others damnably diſobey* in them. But then there are many others which are of a more *heinous*, and *damning nature*: which although ſome well-meaning men may *pardonably* admit at *firſt*, before they have ſeen the *damnable conſequences*, and *effects* of them; yet very few can adhere to when *they* are ſet before them, without being in danger, if repentance intervene not, to be *damn'd* for them. Of which ſort, among ſeveral others, I take theſe to be that follow.

Some are poſſeſſed with an odd belief, that *Chriſt is a Temporal and Secular King in Sion*, (i.e.) the Church on Earth, and *that his ſubjects are to fight for his Intereſts, and for the protection of his Religion, with the ſame*

worldly force and armed violence, that the ſubjects of other ſecular Princes uſe. And as for *Earthly Kings*, ſince they are but Deputies and Delegates of Chriſt the Supream King of all, that *they are no further to be ſubmitted to, than they act ſerviceably and ſubordinately under him*; but that *they may*, yea, *ought to be perſecuted as Enemies and Apoſtates from King Jeſus, if in any thing they oppoſe and act againſt him.*

Now when men have once imbibed this Principle, they run on furiouſly, as every man muſt who underſtands it, into all the miſchiefs of Rebellion and Bloodſhed. For in all Inſtances where this prejudice leads them to it, they utterly overlook, as things not belonging to them, all the plain Laws of *Honour* and *Reverence*, *Submiſſion* and *Obedience* to *Governours*; of *Juſtice* and *Charitableneſs*, *Mercy* and *Peaceableneſs* towards their *Fellow Subjects*: and burſt out violently into *contempt of Governours*, and *reproachful uſage*, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, into *revenge* and *fierceneſs*, *ſtrife* and *bitterneſs*, *ſedition* and *tumults*, *ſpoils* and *robberies*, *murders* and *bloodſhed*; and into all other *licentious* and *extravagant* effects of a moſt *unjuſt war*, and *horrible rebellion*. In all which they think that they only fight Gods battles, and ſpoil and ſlay his enemies, and, like good Subjects and Soldiers of the Lord of Hoſts, with all their might maintain his Rights, and ſerve his Intereſt. For all this rebellion againſt earthly Kings, they eſteem to be nothing elſe, but a proof of their Loyalty and juſt Allegiance to King Jeſus the Soveraign Lord of all, who by theſe worldly means muſt Rule on Earth, although he dwells in Heaven.

Others, to exalt the Temporal Monarchy and Grandeur of *Chriſts pretended Vicar* here on Earth, have imbibed this Principle, that a *good end will juſtifie any action, and that all is lawful which is neceſſary and profitable*

table for the advancement of the Churches Intereſt. And having once ſucked in this venomous Opinion, in all thoſe actions wherein it is any ways concerned, there is no Precept ſo plain which they cannot overlook, nor any obligation ſo ſacred which they do not cancel. They ſtick not at the breach of all the moſt *exalted*, and *ſublime laws of Chriſt*. For inſtead of being *meek* and *gentle*, they are *fierce* and *furious*; inſtead of being *ſlow to wrath*, they are *enemies without provocation*; inſtead of *forgiving injuries*, they are violent to *revenge* them; inſtead of *doing good to enemies*, they are *eager to deſtroy* them; inſtead of *taking up the Croſs*, and *bearing* it with *patience themſelves*, they are utterly *impatient* till by any means they can *force* it upon *others*. Nay, they burſt through the moſt *notorious*, and *weighty Laws* of *Humanity* and *Nature*, in *diſſimulation* and *equivocations*, in *lies* and *perjuries*, in *ſowing ſtrife*, and all manner of *unpeaceableneſs*, in *ſpoils* and *robberies*, *murders* and *aſſaſſinations*, *treaſons* and *rebellions*, which even *natural* conſcience, where it has any force at all, muſt needs tremble and be amazed at. But yet all this time they think that they are doing Gods work, whilſt indeed they are ſubverting his whole Religion; for their poiſonous Principle bears them out through all, and they are confident that what they do will be accepted for his ſervice, becauſe it is intended for the advancement of his *Church*.

Some again of the more extravagant *Anabaptiſts* entertained a wild Opinion, that *all Dominion is founded in Grace*, and that *nothing but virtue and holineſs can give any man a title to his poſſeſſions*. And when once they had believed this, they acted but agreeably to their own Principle in overlooking all the plain Laws of *Juſtice* and *Honeſty* in all thoſe inſtances where this Doctrine would warrant the contrary, and in exerciſing

ſing all ſorts of *fraud*, *couzenage*, *ſpoils*, and *robberies*, where they had *power* and *opportunity* to commit them. For *their ſpoiling of their neighbours* they eſteemed to be like *Iſraels ſpoiling of the Egyptians*, (*viz.*) a taking away that which belonged not to them, ſeeing God had given it away from them.

It were endleſs to recount all the *enormouſly wicked* and *diſobedient Opinions*, which ill men take up in favour of their beloved ſins. For ſome overlook the plain duties of *temperance*, *mortification*, and *ſelf-denial*, becauſe they are *ſenſual* and *fleſhly*: and others give no heed to the manifeſt duty of *paying tythes*, becauſe they are *loth to part* with their *money*. When Chriſt preached up a *charitable* uſe of the *unrighteous Mammon*, the *Phariſees*, *who were covetous*, would not believe and underſtand, but *derided him*, Luk. 16.14. And the ſame way it fares with other duties, when mens unmortified luſts, which are ſtruck at by them, are oppoſed againſt them.

By theſe inſtances, and many more which might be mention'd, it clearly appears how deſtructive many mens conſciences, or prejudicate Opinions are of ſeveral parts of Religion, and the Divine Laws. They do in great meaſure cancel the force of Duty, and make men tranſgreſs in ſeveral inſtances againſt known Laws, by making them firſt to believe that in thoſe caſes they do not oblige them.

But now to determine which of theſe prejudices is *pardonable* and *conſiſtent with a juſtified ſtate*, and which *deſtroys* and *interrupts* it; we muſt obſerve in them this difference.

Firſt, That *ſome* of them *get into mens minds* or *conſciences*, *not through any thing of an evil and diſobedient heart*, *but only through weakneſs of underſtanding*, *or fallibility of the means of knowledge*; and theſe are *conſiſtent*

ſtent with a ſtate of Grace and *Salvation.*

2. That *others get into mens conſciences through ſome damnable luſts and vices*, and *they are deadly and damning.*

Firſt, Some prejudices, which lead men into ſin and diſobedience, *get into their conſciences, not through any thing of an evil and diſobedient heart, but only through weakneſs of underſtanding, and fallibility of the means of knowledge*; and theſe do not *deſtroy, but conſiſt with a ſtate of Grace and Salvation.*

They get not into mens underſtandings by means of an *evil*, and *diſobedient heart*. For it is not any love which they have for the damning ſins of *pride, ambition, ſenſuality, covetouſneſs, unpeaceableneſs, faction*, or the like, which makes them willing to believe thoſe Opinions true that are in favour of them. When they take up their prejudice, they do not ſee ſo far as theſe ill effects, nor diſcern how any of theſe ſins is ſerved by it; and therefore they cannot be thought to admit it with this deſign to ſerve them in it. Nay further, what is the beſt ſign of all, that luſt or diſobedience, which the prejudice happens to miniſter to in ſome inſtance, is *mortified* and *ſubdued* in them; and ſo cannot have any ſuch influence upon them. For ſometimes thoſe very men, who, in ſuch inſtances as their prejudice avows it, are *irreverent* and *diſreſpectful*, *pragmatical* and *diſobedient to their Governours*, or the like; in all other caſes, wherein their Opinion is unconcerned, are moſt *reſpectful, quiet*, and *obedient*. *Humility* and *modeſty, peaceableneſs* and *quietneſs, ſubmiſſion* and *obedience*, are both their temper and their practice. For they love and approve, and, in the ordinary courſe and conſtant tenour of their lives, conſcientiouſly obſerve them; and nothing under ſuch prejudicate Opinion, as makes them belive them to be unlawful in ſome caſes, could overrule

rule that love and obedience which they have for them, and prevail upon them ſo far as to act againſt them. So that with theſe men, it is not the diſobedient temper of their hearts which makes their conſcience err; but the errour and prejudice of their conſcience, which makes their practice diſobedient.

In ſuch men therefore as are thus qualified, who do not ſee thoſe ſins which their prejudice miniſters to when they admit it, and in all the other actions of their lives, except where by this prejudice they are overruled, ſhew plainly that they have mortified and overcome it: 'tis clear, that the prejudice did not get into their conſciences by any influence of an evil, and diſobedient heart.

But that which made way for it, was only their *natural weakneſs of underſtanding*, or the *fallibility of the means of knowledge*. They are not of an underſtanding ſufficient to examine things exactly when they embrace their prejudice; for their *Reaſon* then is *dim* and *ſhort-ſighted*, *weak* and *unexperienced*, unable throughly to *ſearch into the natures of things*, and to *judge of the various weight*, *and juſt force of reaſons*, to *ſift* and *ranſack*, *ſeparate* and *diſtinguiſh* between *ſolidity* and *ſhow*, *truth* and *falſehood*. But thoſe arguments whereupon they believe, and upon the credit whereof they take up Opinions, are *education* and *converſe*, the *inſtruction of ſpiritual guides*, the *ſhort reaſonings* of their *neighbours* and *acquaintance*, or the *authority* of ſuch *books* or *perſons*, as they are ordered to *read*, and directed to ſubmit to. *Theſe* are the motives to their belief, and the arguments whereupon they are induced to think one Opinion right, and another wrong, and the only means which they have of diſcerning between truth and falſehood.

But now all theſe means are in no wiſe *certain*; they are

are an argument of belief indeed, and the beſt that ſuch men have; but yet they are far from being *infallibly concluſive*. Sometimes they lead men right, but at other times they lead them wrong; for they are not at all determined one way, but in *ſeveral men*, and at *ſeveral times*, according as it happens, they miniſter both to truth and falſehood.

In matters that are *primarily of belief* and *ſpeculation in Religion*, they lead an *hundred* men to errour, where they lead *one* to Truth. For there are an *hundred* Religions in the world, whereof *one* alone is true; and every one has this to plead in its own behalf, that it is the Religion of the Place and Party where it is believed. The Profeſſors of it are drawn to aſſent to it upon theſe Arguments, (*viz.*) becauſe they have been *Bred* up to it by the care of their *Parents* and *Teachers*, and *confirmed* in it by long *Uſe* and *Converſe*: It was *Education* and *Cuſtome*, the *Authority* of their *Spiritual Guides*, and the *common Perſwaſion* of their *Countrey*, which made them both at firſt to believe, and ſtill to adhere to it. And every one in theſe points having theſe Arguments to plead for his own belief, againſt the belief of every other man who differs from him: ſince of all theſe different Beliefs one alone is true, theſe Arguments muſt be allow'd indeed to miniſter to Truth in that, but in all the reſt to ſerve the Intereſt of Falſehood.

In matters of *Duty* and *Practice*, 'tis true, there is infinitely more *accord* and *good agreement*. For almoſt all the *laws of nature*, which make up by far the greateſt part of every *Chriſtians* Duty, are the *Catholick* Religion of all *ſober Sects* and *Parties* in the world. So that theſe Arguments of *Cuſtome* and *Education*, are tolerably good, and right guides to mens *Conſciences*, how ill ſoever they are to their ſpeculative *Opinions*; becauſe al-

though they carry them into a *wrong belief*, yet will they lead them into a *righteous practice*.

But although in theſe *practical Notions* and *Opinions*, they are *commonly* a *right*; yet *ſometimes*, and to ſeveral perſons, they prove a *wrong inſtrument*. For even in matters of *Duty* and *Practice*, men are no more ſecure from *errour*, than they are from *diſobedience*; nor more certain that they ſhall have no miſtakes about them, than that they ſhall not go beyond them. They have, and, till they come to Heaven, ever will have erroneous Opinions as well as practices; ſo that theſe motives, *Education*, and *Cuſtome*, and *Authority*, will never be wanting in the world, to inſtil into weak and undiſcerning minds ſuch Opinions, as will, in ſome inſtances and degrees, evacuate, and undermine ſome duties.

And ſince there will never be wanting in the world ſuch fallible Arguments and means of knowing, nor ſuch weak and unexperienced underſtandings as muſt of neceſſity make uſe of them: 'tis plain, that ſeveral diſobedient prejudices will in all times get into mens minds, not through any wickedneſs or diſobedience of their hearts, but only through the natural weakneſs of their minds, and the fallibility of the means of knowledge.

And when any prejudices which lead to diſobedience enter this way, they do not *put us out of Gods favour*, or *deſtroy a ſtate of Grace* and *Salvation*; but *conſiſt* with it. For in our whole action of diſobedience upon them, there is nothing that ſhould provoke Gods wrath, and punitive diſpleaſure againſt us. He will not be at *enmity* with us, either *for acting according to our erroneous Conſcience*, or, if the errour was thus innocent, *for having an erroneous conſcience for our rule of action*.

He will *not be offended at us*, I ſay, for *acting according*

ing to our erroneous conſcience: for whether our conſcience be true or falſe, it is the only rule that we can act by. We cannot perform duty without we underſtand it, nor obey Laws before we have ſome knowledge of them: we muſt judge what is commanded before we can obſerve it, and whether we judge right or wrong, we have no way to obey, but by acting according to ſuch judgment. Yea, if our Conſcience does err, and innocently miſtake our Duty, yet whil'ſt we follow it in the ſimplicity of our hearts, we perform the *life* and *ſoul of Obedience*, even when we erroneouſly tranſgreſs it. For we do the miſtaken action out of an *obedient intention*, we exert it *for Gods ſake*, in an *acknowledgement of his Authority* and a *reſignation to his pleaſure*; and this is ſo truly the life and ſpirit of an *acceptable obedience*, that, in caſe of ſuch erroneous belief, we ſhould *ſinfully* and *damnably diſobey* ſhould we neglect it. So that if the errour of our conſcience it ſelf be inoffenſive, God will not take offence at our well meant, and obediently deſign'd performance of that, which our conſcience erroneouſly tells us we are bound in duty to perform.

Nor will God be *offended at us for having ſuch a ſcandal* or rock of offence, as this prejudice and errour of our conſcience is, if the *errour it ſelf is thus innocent*. He will not take it ill that we did not judge that to be our Duty, which the Principle we had to judge by told us was no Duty, or it may be a breach of Duty and a ſin. For this was truly to judge by Principles, and to have recourſe in judgment to the beſt and likelieſt notions, which we could find in our own minds; which way of paſſing judgment is all that we have, and the very method which he himſelf has preſcribed us. Neither will he be angry at us for *admitting ſuch falſe Opinions* into our minds, as ſhould afterwards *miſguide* us,

if it were not our *ſins* and *paſſions*, but the *ordinary way*, and *uſual means of knowledge* which got them entrance. For when the very ſame means of information and diſcourſe, which carry us on to truth in other opinions, miſlead us into errour and miſtake in theſe; we err in the honeſty of our hearts, and in the uſe of means and ordinary endeavours; ſo that nothing remains for our errour to be charged upon, but either a *weakneſs of underſtanding*, or an *ill fortune*: either that uſing fallible means, we were not ſo wiſe as to avoid being deceived by them; or that we had the ill hap to be guided by them in ſuch an inſtance, when errour lay at the end of them. And ſince theſe Cauſes of errour are only our weakneſs and unhappineſs, but not our fault and diſobedience; God will graciouſly bear with us, and will not be extream to puniſh us for them. Or if we happen to err in an inſtance wherein he will exact obedience, he will at leaſt bear with us ſo long, till beſides the *plain declarations* of our Duty, and the *common means* of knowing it, we have had moreover ſuch accumulation of proof and clearing of the Caſe, as will, if we are not wanting to our ſelves, anſwer all our exceptions, and bear down all our prejudices againſt it.

And of this we have a clear inſtance in the errour of the *Apoſtles*, about the diſcharge of that great Duty, of *preaching the Goſpel to all Nations immediately after Chriſt's aſcenſion*. He had enjoined this in a Command as plain, one would think, as words can make it. *All power is given unto me in Heaven, and in Earth; Go ye therefore, and teach*, not the *Jews* only, to whom I ſent you at firſt, but *all Nations*, Matth. 28. 18, 19. preaching *remiſſion of ſins upon repentance to all Nations, beginning at Jeruſalem*, Luke 24. 47. But for all this Precept was ſo expreſs, and this Declaration of their Duty was

ſo

ſo plain and evident; yet was it not of it ſelf ſufficient to give them an underſtanding of it. For thoſe prepoſſeſſions, which they lay under, drew ſuch a Veil before their eyes, and linked their minds ſo faſt to a contrary belief, that they took no notice of it, nor ever thought their contrary practice to be forbid by it. They thought ſtill that *Iſrael was Gods peculiar people*, that *the Jews were the only ſeed of Abraham*, and that *the great Prophet Meſſiah, whom* Moſes *told them God would one Day raiſe up among them, for eminence and extraordinarineſs of Divine Commiſſion, like unto him, was to be theirs peculiarly to whom God had promiſed him.* Theſe prejudices and anticipations of Judgment, had been inſtilled into their young and tender minds, by the early *care* of their *Parents*, and fomented by the *inſtruction* of their *Teachers*, and daily more and more confirmed in them by *converſation*, and an *uninterrupted cuſtom of perſwaſion*. And being thus forcibly impreſſed upon them, they had ſo blocked up their obedient and well-meaning minds, that when a plain command required them to practiſe contrary to this belief, they did not underſtand but overlook it. Inſomuch that *Peter* himſelf was not convinced of it by the manifeſt injunction of a clear Law; but ſtood in need to have his *doubts ſolved*, and his *exceptions anſwered*, and his former prejudices confuted and overborn, by ſuch accumulation of proof and evidence, as God was pleaſed to give him, in a moſt condeſcenſive Diſpute upon that Subject, by an *after* and *repeated* Revelation, *Acts* 10. and 11. Chapters.

But now this ignorance of their Duty, which was ſo plainly delivered in the words of a clear Law, did not put them out of Gods favour, becauſe it was occaſioned only by ſuch hindrances, as were conſiſtent with an honeſt heart, or ſuch, whereto not their *ſins* and *paſſions*,

ſions, but their *natural weakneſs of underſtanding*, and their *education* and *cuſtom*, thoſe *fallible means of knowledge*, had betrayed them. For God ſtill lovingly embraced them; he bore with their weakneſſes, and helped their infirmities; he pitied their ignorance whilſt they laboured under it, and becauſe he ſaw it was fit and neceſſary that they ſhould get quit of it, he graciouſly afforded them a further, and more powerful evidence whereby to overcome it. And all this pardon and forbearance, I ſay, they found, becauſe their prejudices were conſiſtent with an honeſt heart, ſince they were begot in them, not by any luſts or vices, but only by their weakneſs of underſtanding, and the fallibility of the means of knowledge.

But as ſome prejudices which lead to ſin and diſobedience, get into mens Conſciences only through weakneſs of underſtanding, and fallibility of means, which are therefore conſiſtent with a ſtate of favour and ſalvation; ſo are there,

2. *Several others which got into their Conſciences, through the aſſiſtance of their luſts and vices*; and theſe are *deadly* and *damning*.

Mens luſts and vices have a great influence upon their minds, and the chief hand many times in molding of their judgments and opinions. And therefore we may know mens *manners* by their *perſwaſions about their Duty*, before ever we ſee their *practices*. For they who will live wickedly, will quickly bring their minds to think wickedly. Their luſts and vices will ſoon inſinuate themſelves into their judgments and apprehenſions: they will diſpoſe their ſouls for ſuch perſwaſions, as are moſt ſerviceable to them; and win them with eaſe into a *belief* of evil things, by making them *willing* firſt, and *eagerly deſirous to believe* them.

For our *belief* of any opinion, is produced in us by our

our *diligent ſearch*, and *conſideration of all ſuch Arguments as can get credit to it*; and by *overlooking* or *clearing ſuch difficulties*, or *induſtriouſly conſidering* and *improving all the anſwers to ſuch exceptions, as are made againſt it.* As on the contrary, our *disbelief* of any opinion is effected, by *overlooking* or *weakening all thoſe reaſons which are brought to prove it*, by *darkening it with difficulties, perplexing it with doubts*, and raiſing ſuch *exceptions* as may ſhake or overthrow it. But now as for the employing of our wit and induſtry in either of theſe, it is plainly in our own *choice*, and we deal *indifferently* and *impartially* between both, or eſpouſe either *part*, as we ſtand affected. If then we are *earneſtly deſirous*, and ſtrongly enclined for *one way*; we can *overlook* or *anſwer all that makes againſt it*, and *throw by difficulties, clear up doubts, invent reaſons to juſtifie* and *prove it.* So that the will and pleaſure of our hearts will quickly draw after it the judgment of our underſtandings, and if once we are reſolved upon a way, we ſhall ſoon find reaſons to avow it.

When therefore our luſts and vices have got our hearts, and give Laws to our wills and appetites; they will quickly bear Rule in our underſtandings alſo. We ſhall quickly believe that any of their gratifications are lawful, when once we are greatly deſirous to have them ſo. Nothing being a more probable, and ordinary effect in the *nature of things*, as well as in the juſt *judgment of God*, of a *diſobedient* and *rebellious heart*, than a *reprobate mind*, or a mind * void of Judgment, *Rom.* 1.18, 21,28. * ἀδόκιμος νόος.

So long then as men have *wicked hearts*, it cannot be expected but that they will have *debauched conſciences*: for whilſt they retain unmortified luſts and vices, they will juſtifie them in their own thoughts by damnably ſinful, and diſobedient opinions. They will take up prejudices

ces and a wrong belief, not to direct and guide, but to defend their wicked practice. The *factious* and *unpeaceable* man will eaſily perſwade himſelf into that belief, which *diſturbs Peace*, and *oppoſes Government*. The *covetous ſoul* will favour any Tenet, which *promotes gain*, and *advances intereſt*. The *licentious Libertine* will ſnatch at any opinion, that *gratifies the fleſh*, and pleads the Cauſe of *ſenſuality* and *ſoftneſs*. Mens *pride* and *ambition*, their *fierceneſs* and *cruelty*, their *malice* and *revenge*, their *contentiouſneſs* and *faction*, their *ſenſuality* and *covetouſneſs*, will make them overlook the *humble* and *lowly*, the *meek* and *gentle*, the *patient* and *merciful*, the *quiet* and *peaceable*, the *generous* and *ſelf-denying* Laws of Chriſt, and greedily imbibe ſuch *wicked prejudices*, and erroneous conceits, as *evacuate* and *overthrow* them.

To illuſtrate this buſineſs, let us conſider it in ſome *inſtances*.

That execrable Sect of men the *Gnoſticks*, who were ſo famous for their *impure* and *lawleſs conſciences*, were not more notorious for their *vile opinions*, than for their *evil lives*. I will conſider both, that it may from thence more clearly appear how influential their luſts were upon their minds, in begetting ſuitable perſwaſions.

As for their *lives*, they were infamous for *covetouſneſs*, *cowardice*, and *ſoftneſs*, in heaping up wealth, and avoiding all loſs of Goods and bodily pains, though by means never ſo wicked and diſhonourable: and for the greateſt *luxury*, and *unnaturalneſs* in their *luſts* and *unclean pleaſures*.

They were notoriouſly infamous for their *covetouſneſs*, and abominably *ſoft* and *irreligious compliances*. For they are deſcribed as men that *have their hearts exerciſed with covetous practices*, 2 Pet. 2. 14; that *do a-*

ny

ny thing becauſe of advantage, Jude 16; that forſake the right way of Worſhip and Religion, and go aſtray from it into the by-paths of * *idolatry* and *prophaneneſs*, when they are like to ſuffer by it; being thus far fitly compared to *Balaam* the Son of *Bozor*, that they, profeſſing true Chriſtianity, join in idol-worſhip with the *idolatrous Gentiles*; as he, being a true Prophet, did in the idolatrous worſhip of the *King* of *Moab*, Numb. 22.40, 41: and alſo in that they ſort and combine with the Jewiſh and Gentile Perſecutors of the Chriſtians; as he did in *curſing* firſt, and afterwards in *fighting againſt the Iſraelites* in the *Army of Midian*, Numb. 31. 8; upon which accounts, *his way* or errour they are ſaid to follow, 2 *Pet.* 2. 15 *Jud.* 11. Their Character is to *deſert the publick Aſſemblies*, by reaſon of the heat of perſecution againſt all that dare frequent them, *Heb.* 10. 25; to *deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, when they are in danger to ſuffer for the owning of them, *Jude* 4.

* *Idolothyta indifferenter manducant, nihil inquinari abiis putantes; & in omnem Diem Feſtum Ethnicorum, pro voluntate in honore Idolorum factum, primi conveniunt*, &c. Iren. adv. Hæreſes, l. 1. c. 1.

They were alſo equally notorious for abominable *luxury*, and *unnaturalneſs* in their *luſts* and *unclean pleaſures*. For they are ſet out to us as men that are *ſenſual*, *Jud.* 19; that *account it a pleaſure to riot in the day time*, 2 Pet. 2. 13; that *defile the fleſh*, Jud. 8; that *walk after the fleſh in luſts of uncleanneſs*, 2 Pet. 2. 10; in *pernicious*, or, as it is rendred from other Copies in the Margin of our Bibles, † *laſcivious ways*, verſ. 2; that *have eyes full of adultery*, ver. 14; and that are not content to riot in theſe abominable filthineſſes themſelves, but uſe them as baits to decoy, and draw in others; *alluring through the luſts of the fleſh, and through much wantonneſs, thoſe who* * *really*, or for a † *little while had eſcaped from ſuch* an abominable *life of errour*, verſ. 18.

† ἀσελγείαις, MS. Alexand. & plur. al.

* ὄντως.
† The Kings MS. ὀλίγον.

Thus was their life and temper over-run with *coveTtt* *touſneſs*,

touſneſs, baſely cowardous and ſinful compliances; and with moſt filthy luſts, and unnatural uncleanneſſes. Both which St. Peter ſetting himſelf againſt, requires all men, who would be thought to have that true and ſaving knowledge, which is oppoſite to that falſe and ſpurious one which they * pretended to, to give all diligence in adding to it theſe two Duties, which are directly contrary to their vile luſts; viz. vertue, or courage and conſtancy, which is oppoſite to their baſe arts of tergiverſation and ſinful compliances; and continence or chaſtity, which is contrary to their unclean practices. Give all diligence to add to virtue, or valorous courage, knowledge, and to knowledge temperance or † continence, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.

* γνωστικοί.

† ἐγκράτειαν.

Now theſe men having ſuch a Scene of debauchery in their lives, they quickly became as lewd and debauched in their conſciences. When once, for all their profeſſions of knowing God, they began, as St. Paul ſays, in works to deny him; they quickly made their Conſciences to be as filthy and polluted, as were their practices. To theſe defiled Wretches, ſaith he, is nothing pure, their very mind and conſcience is defiled; for they have loſt all ſenſe of purity and Duty, being unto * every good work reprobate or void of judgment, Tit. 1. 15, 16. They overlooked and disbelieved all the Chriſtian Laws of paſſive valour, and patient courage, of generoſity and contentedneſs, of mortification and ſelf-denial, chaſtity and temperance; and fell into theſe lewd opinions, for which they were ſo infamous in the Apoſtolick Age, and will be ſtill, among all men that are but competently ſober, to the Worlds end. For they introduced into the World the ſcandalouſly vile and profli-

* Quemadmodum aurum in cœno depoſitum non amittit decorem ſuum, ſed ſuam naturam cuſtodit, cum cœnum nil nocere auro poſſit: ſic & ſemet ipſos dicunt, licet in quibuſcunque materialibus operibus ſint, nil noceri, neque amittere ſpiritualem ſubſtantiam. Quapropter & intimorate omnia quæ vetantur, hi, qui ſunt ipſorum perfecti, operantur; de quibus Scripturæ confirmant quoniam qui faciunt ea, Regnum Dei non hæreditabunt. Iren. l. 1. c. 1.

gate

gate opinions, that all * *filthy* and *unnatural uncleanneſſes*; that † *denying Chriſt to be come in the fleſh in times of perſecution*, and that *our Jeſus was he*; are parts of *Chriſtian liberty*, and things *lawful* and *allowable* in a *knowing*, in a *ſpiritual*, in a *perfect* man. *Turning* by this means, as St. *Jude* ſays, *the Grace of God* and his Goſpel, which under the higheſt pains forbids and puniſhes them; *into* a liberty and allowance of theſe their Characteriſtick Vices, *viz. laſciviouſneſs*, with all manner of filthineſs, and *denying*, when they are in danger to ſuffer for him *the only Lord God*, *and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Jude 4.

* Concerning laſcivious pleaſures being allowed to them, who are perfect and ſpiritual; and denied to others, who, as they were wont to ſpeak, are animal, they taught thus: *Quicunq; in ſæculo eſt & uxorem non amat ut ei conjugatur, non eſt de veritate, & non tranſiet in veritatem. Qui autem de ſæculo eſt mixtus mulieri, non tranſit in veritatem, quoniam in concupiſcentia eſt mixtus mulieri. Quapropter nobis quidem, quos* Pſychicos *vocant, & de ſæculo eſſe dicunt, neceſſariam continentiam & bonam operationem, uti per eam veniamus in meditatis locum: ſibi autem, ſpiritalibus & perfectis vocatis, nullo modo.* Iren. ib.

† *Agrippa Caſtor* ſays that *Baſilides*, one of their chief Heads taught thus: Ἀδιαφορεῖν εἰ ῥαλοθύτων ἐσθιόμενα, καὶ ἐξομνυμένους ἀπροφυλακτως τὴν πίστιν ἐν τοῖς τοῦ διωγμοῦ καιροῖς: As he is cited by *Euſebius*, *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 4. *c.* 7. See alſo *Epiphan. Hæreſ.* 24.

Another inſtance of their behaviour we have ſet down in relation to the *Publick*; and that is this, They were of a *proud* and *ungovernable*, of a *haughty* and *turbulent*, a *querulous* and *ſeditious* humour. Their temper is to be *preſumptuous and ſelf-willed*, 2 Pet. 2. 10; which they evidence every where by *deſpiſing Dominion*, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*, Jude 8; and by *murmuring* and *complaining*, as men that are always diſcontented, and never pleaſed with any adminiſtration of affairs, *ver.* 16.

And agreeable to this *ungovernableneſs of their lives* and *tempers*, were the *licentious principles* and *opinions of their minds*. For they were the men, who *promiſed* their Followers *liberty* from all ſubjection, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19; and who deſpiſed all *Maſters* and *Governours*, as being by the new Character of Chriſtianity become their *Brethren*, and therefore, as they argued from that Title,

now only *equal* to them, not *ſuperior*, as they muſt be, who would pretend to rule and govern them, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1, 2. The Abettors of which Doctrine, St. *Paul* aſſures *Timothy* do in reality *know nothing*, notwithſtanding all the falſe ſhow of that ſwoln Title, * *knowing men*, which they ſo vainly arrogate to themſelves, *verſ.* 4.

* Γνωστικοί.

The wicked Sect of the *Phariſees*, who were the *reproach* of the *Jewiſh*, as theſe *filthy Gnoſticks* were of the *Chriſtian* Name, were of a *life* and *temper proud* and *ambitious*, *covetous* and *rapacious*; whoſe *heart* and *inſide*, as well as their *life* and *practice*, was all *rottenneſs* and *diſobedience*. For if we would have a character of them, our Saviour himſelf has given us one in the 23*d.* of St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, which is moſt *compleat* and *particular*; wherein a combination of theſe ſeveral vices are ſet to make up their deſcription.

Firſt, *Vain-glory*. *All their works they did to be ſeen of men*, verſ. 5.

Secondly, *Pride* and *Ambition*. *They loved the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and the chief ſeats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the* publick *markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi*, that is to ſay Maſter, or Doctor, *verſ.* 6, 7.

Thirdly, *Covetouſneſs*, *Fraud* and *Rapaciouſneſs*. For beſides that St *Luke* informs us of their being *covetous*, *Luk.* 16. 14; we are told here, that they would moſt prophanely abuſe the moſt *ſacred* things for their *covetous* ends, and *make long prayers* only *for a pretence*, that thereby they might be enabled more eaſily, and without ſuſpicion, *to devour* even Orphans, and *Widows houſes*, verſ. 14: being indeed, whatſoever they might outwardly appear to be, *all extortion and exceſs within*, verſ. 25.

Fourthly, *Hypocriſie*. For they would *diſſemble* even in

in their moſt *ſolemn performances*, and uſe Religion only as a ſtalking-horſe to w rldly deſigns. They *made long prayers* only *for a pretence*, verſ. 14; what they *made clean*, *was only the outſide*, verſ. 25; for that indeed they beautified, but ſtill they were *all ſtench and rottenneſs within*, verſ. 27.

In ſumm, they *ſaid*, but *did not*; they *bound heavy burdens on other mens ſhoulders*, *but would not touch them themſelves with one of their fingers*, verſ. 3, 4. Yea, take them, even at the beſt, where they were Religious; and that they will be found to have been only in trifles, but not in ſubſtantial Duties; for *they ſtrained at gnats*, at the ſame time that they *ſwallow'd Camels*; *they paid tythe of* cheap and inconſiderable things, ſuch as *mint and anniſe*, *and cummin*; but *they omitted all the weightier matters of the Law*, *as Judgment*, *Mercy*, *and Faith*, verſ. 23, 24.

And ſince they were men of this character, thus *unmortified* in their *luſts*, and thus *vicious* and *irreligious* in their *practice*; what can in reaſon be expected, but that they ſhould be full of debauchery and diſobedience in their *conſciences*, and *perſwaſions* alſo? And ſo accordingly we find they were. For when Chriſt preached to them the Doctrine of *Charity* and *Liberality*, in oppoſition to their *miſerable worldly* way; they, *being covetous*, inſtead of believing, fell a mocking and *deriding him*, Luk. 16. 14. And as they treated Chriſt in this particular, ſo did they likewiſe in all the reſt of his Religion. For finding that it required ſuch *humility*, *ſincerity*, *honeſty*, *contentedneſs*, and *heavenly-mindedneſs*, as were inconſiſtent with theſe *unmortified luſts* of theirs which I have mention'd; they would not *owne* and *embrace*, but, for that reaſon eſpecially, *reject* and *disbelieve* it. Nay further, even in their *own* acknowledged way, they took up ſeveral diſobedient prejudices

dices to ſerve their luſts; and either wholly evacuated, or in great part impair'd ſeveral Laws, by admitting ſuch erroneous perſwaſions as undermined them. For to gratifie their *haughty* and *ſtubborn*, their *pettiſh* and *revengeful* humour, they entertain'd a conceit, that *if they* did but *ſay it is Corban*, or *a gift by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me*; (*i.e.*) I bind my ſelf by the vow or oath call'd *Corban*, never more to do any good to thee, which was a form of oath in uſe among the *Jews*; they ſhould be freed from all obligation of the *fifth Commandment*, requiring *honour*, *ſervice*, or *relief to their Father or Mother*, Mat. 15.4,5,6. And *many other things like to this*, our Saviour tells us, *they did*, Mark 7. 13. But not to enquire further about *particulars*, we are plainly aſſured of them in the *general*, that they *tranſgreſſed*, *rejected*, and *evacuated the Laws of God*, *through* the erroneous perſwaſions and prejudicate belief of *their traditions*, Mat. 15.3,6. Mark 7.9.

Thus natural, and obvious it is for a *wicked life* to work a *diſobedient belief*; and for mens *unmortified luſts* and *paſſions*, which ſet themſelves againſt Gods Laws, to convey ſuch *prejudices* into their conſciences, as will *evacuate* and *overthrow* them. Their *unbelief* enters through the *corruption* of their *heart*, and is therefore called an *evil heart of unbelief*, Heb. 3.12. they *are hardened* into a want of all ſenſe and conſcience of their offences, *through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*, verſ. 13. And this effect is obvious, and ordinary; for not only the *nature of things*, but even the juſt *judgement of God*, concur to it: Nothing being more common, than for *thoſe men*, *who hold the truth*, as St. *Paul* ſays, *in unrighteouſneſs* of living, *and* even *whilſt they know God*, *do not glorifie him* by their ſervice and obedience, which are due to him, and are our way of glorifying him *as God*, *nor are thankful* in their hearts and actions; to

loſe

loſe that knowledge, and *to become vain in their imaginations, their fooliſh heart being darkned,* by *Gods giving them over to a reprobate mind,* or a mind void of all true judgement, *to do thoſe things which are not convenient,* not knowing they are ſo, *Rom.* 1.18,21,28.

But now as for *theſe prejudices,* which get into our *conſciences* and *perſwaſions,* not through any *force of reaſon* which *compells,* but through the *witchcraft* of *luſts* and *vices* which *enveagle,* and make us *willing* and *deſirous* to believe them; they will *not excuſe* us, becauſe they are themſelves *ſinful,* and *deſerve damnation.* For they enter at an ill door, and win upon us through a reigning luſt, or a damning ſin; and therefore they are ſo far from excuſing thoſe tranſgreſſions which flow from them, that in themſelves they are inſtances and effects of a deadly offence, and, if repentance intervene not, will certainly prove deſperate and damning.

St. *Paul* in *breathing out threatnings* againſt all believers, and in *perſecuting of the Church,* acted only according to the beſt of his own *Judgment* and *Opinion.* For he verily thought with himſelf, that he not only *might,* but *ought to do ſeveral things contrary to the Name of Jeſus of Nazareth,* Acts 26.9. But as this Opinion was his ſin, ſo would his tranſgreſſions upon it have proved his condemnation, had not God ſhewn pity on him in calling him to *repentance* and *converſion,* whereby alone it was that he obtained *mercy* and *pardon. I was,* ſays he, *a perſecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy by that Grace of God* conferr'd upon me at my converſion, *which was exceeding abundant with* theſe two fundamental Graces, which are a moſt prolifick ſpring of all the reſt, (*viz.*) *Faith, and Love, which is in Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 Tim. 1.13,14.

The *Jews,* who *blaſphemed* and *crucified our Saviour,* did nothing againſt their own conſcience: for their Opinion bore them out in all that practice, in regard they judged

judged it to be no *ſinful murther*, but a moſt *neceſſary act of Juſtice upon a great impoſtor*, and a moſt *laudable* and *legal execution*. *I wot Brethren*, ſays St. *Peter*, *that through ignorance ye did it, as did*, not you only, but *alſo your rulers*, Acts 3. 14, 15, 17. *For had they known it*, ſays St. *Paul*, *they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 8. But foraſmuch as this Ignorance was their own fault, and their prejudices were owing to their own vices, in regard that for this reaſon alone their minds would not receive a true belief of Chriſt and his Laws, becauſe they plainly contradicted their ſinful luſts and practices: therefore ſhould it by no means excuſe them, but, if their repentance did not prevent it, it would moſt certainly in the end prove deadly and damning. For their *crucifixion of him*, he tells them, was by *wicked hands*, Acts 2. 23: and it was only upon *their repentance*, and *converſion*, *that their ſins* of blaſphemy and murder *ſhould be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19.

Again, the tranſgreſſions of the *Phariſees* were juſtified by their own Opinions; for they looked upon themſelves, notwithſtanding them, to be *holy men*, and *favourites of Heaven*: But proceeding as we have ſeen they did, from unmortified luſts and a wicked life, they rendred them obnoxious to damnation; *How can you eſcape the damnation of hell?* Mat. 23. 33. The ſins of the *Gnoſticks*, notwithſtanding they were warranted by their diſobedient Principles, were of a damnable nature; for their *hereſies* and *diſobedient Principles* themſelves, being the effects of diſobedient and wicked hearts, *deſerved damnation*, and are called by St. *Peter*, in that *Chapter* where he recounts them, and with great zeal inveighs againſt them, *damnable hereſies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. They are *works of the fleſh*, or the products of unmortified luſts and carnal practices; and muſt therefore ſhare in the ſame judgment with other fleſhly works, amongſt

amongſt whom they are reckon'd. *The works of the fleſh*, ſays St. *Paul*, *are manifeſt, ſeditions, hereſies, envyings, murders, drunkenneſs; of the which I tell you, that they which do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. If we will tranſgreſs our Duty by disbelieving it firſt, and giving credit to ſuch Opinions as deſtroy the obligation of it; our disbelief of our Duty will by no means excuſe our ſin, or reſcue us from condemnation. For to disbelieve the *Laws* and *threatnings of Chriſt*, is the very worſt part of *unbelief*, and the moſt hateful and deadly inſtance of *infidelity*. And as for *unbelievers*, ſays St. *John*, or thoſe men who will not believe *Religion*, or the beſt part of it, *Laws* and *Duties*, but ſeek to evade its force after that God has plainly told them of it; *they ſhall have their part in the Lake, which burns with fire and brimſtone*, Rev. 21. 8. Men *without underſtanding*, who will not ſee their Duty, becauſe they are * blinded by ſuch luſts as fight againſt it, in *the judgment of God are* † *worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 31, 32. The reaſon why their conſciences adhere to ſuch Opinions as utterly deſtroy their Duty, is only becauſe their luſts and vices have made them *hate*, and *turn away* from it. And as for every ſuch prejudice againſt a Duty, as proceeds from our *averſation* to it, it is of a great guilt, and liable to a very ſevere puniſhment. For in this St. *Paul* is peremptory; *All they ſhall be damned who believe a lie, and believe not the truth, through the pleaſure which they take in unrighteouſneſs: They ſhall periſh, becauſe they receive not the* LOVE *of the Truth, that they may be ſaved by it*, 2 Theſſ. 2. 10, 11, 12.

* Rom. 1. 21, 28.
† Mat. 15. 14.

When our diſobedient prejudices therefore enter upon this ſcore, and are begot in us through a wicked heart, and through ſome reigning luſts and vices which are ſerved by them; but not by any weakneſs of underſtanding,

derſtanding, or ſuch fallibility of means, as may betray even an honeſt heart into them: they are ſubject to a ſad doom, and a ſevere cenſure; they will by no means plead our excuſe, but are an Article of our condemnation.

And as for ſome marks whereby to judge whether our diſobedient prejudices proceed from this deadly Principle, *our unmortified luſts* and *vices*, and thereupon are of this *dangerous* and *damning nature*, or no; we may obſerve theſe *Characters*, and judge according to *theſe meaſures*.

Firſt, If that *Luſt* or *Sin* whereto our prejudice is ſubſervient, be *ſtrong* and *powerful*, *if it reign in us*, *and*, *in the ordinary courſe and cuſtome of our lives*, *gives laws to us*: the *corruption* and *diſobedience of our heart*, is plainly the cauſe of our *diſobedient conſcience* and *corrupt perſwaſion*. It is not only the errour of our conſcience which makes us ſerve the ſin, for we ſerve it equally in other inſtances where that is wholly unconcerned. The Sin is unmortified and imperious, it carries us on to tranſgreſs where it is further'd by the errour of our conſciences, and where it wants it. But it is the wickedneſs of our hearts which makes us to be wicked in our judgments, and to eſpouſe ſuch Opinions as encourage and defend it. For when any luſt is ſo ſtrong in us, as to rule our practice, it will be ſure to lay a corrupt byaſs upon our wills, ſo that we ſhall be apt ſtill to judge in favour of it, and be very partial in all thoſe Opinions wherein it has any intereſt. And therefore ſeveral diſobedient prejudices will be taken up to ſerve a turn, and we ſhall work our ſelves up into a belief of them for the ſins ſake, which is juſtified and protected by them.

Is any man therefore of a temper and converſation that is *fierce* and *contentious*, *buſie* and *reſtleſs*, *forward*

to

to give Laws, and *impatient to ſubmit to them*: 'Tis no wonder if he takes up Opinions that juſtifie *contempt of Governours*, that avow *Alteration* and *Diſturbance*, and countenance *Faction*, *Sedition*, and a *Civil War*. For the ungovernableneſs of his Conſcience is but agreeable to the ungovernableneſs of his Practice; the Sin reign'd firſt in his heart and life, and was from thence with eaſe inſtill'd into his Opinion and Perſwaſion.

Is any man habitually inclined to *Pride* and *Ambition*, *Wrath* and *Malice*, *Revenge* and *Cruelty*; is he *greedy of Gain*, and a *ſlave* to *ſenſual Delights* and *bodily Pleaſures*: He is prepared for any of thoſe *Vile Opinions* which overturn all Laws to promote *Chriſts Temporal Power* on Earth, or to advance the *ſecular* greatneſs of his *pretended Vicar* and *Holy Church*; and for any others of like nature. For the unmortified luſts are a Law to him in his life, before they come to govern in his conſcience; he is firſt wicked and rebellious in his heart, and that makes him to admit of ſuch wicked Opinions into his underſtanding.

In theſe men then the caſe is plain; it is clearly ſeen how they came by their diſobedient prejudices, for their lives and converſations ſhow that abundantly. Diſobedience reign'd firſt in their hearts, and thence got into their conſciences and perſwaſions.

Secondly, If the *diſobedience and the prejudice lay ſo near*, and *were ſo cloſe conjoyn'd, that a man could not but ſee one when he ſaw the other; it is ſtill imputable to his wicked luſts and vices.* For he diſcerned how obedience was impair'd, and how the Sin was ſerved by it, when he firſt gave credit to it; and therefore he was plainly acted by a want of vertue and an evil heart. For if he had been touched with any love of virtue, he could not have allowed of that, which he knew would evacuate and undermine it; but he would have ſhewn

much more forwardneſs to reject the Opinion for the ſake of the ſin, than to embrace it upon any appearances of argument and reaſon. So that his prejudice enter'd through an averſation to that inſtance of obedience which it undermined; and it was his love to the wicked luſt which was advanced by it, that made way for it. He willingly and deſignedly ſerved the ſin, and he ſaw how much the Opinion contributed to it, and therefore he readily imbraced it.

Nay further,

Thirdly, If the ſinful conſequences were *not* diſcerned when a man at firſt embraced it; yet *if they are ſuch as are of a plain unqueſtionable guilt*, and *greatly ſinful*, and *when he is ſhewed afterwards how they follow from it, he ſtill ſtands by it and adheres to it*; however the *prejudicate Opinion might enter at the firſt*, yet it *holds poſſeſſion by a heart that is wicked and diſobedient*.

Some ſins there are, whoſe *guilt* is not altogether ſo *clear* and *indiſputable*, but that an *innocent* and *honeſt*, although a *weak* and *erring* mind, may ſometimes queſtion and overlook it. And thus many truly religious ſouls do not think, that their *refuſing to obſerve the commands of men about the ceremonies of divine worſhip, is diſobedience*; or that their *over-acting in the cauſe of God and Religion, is pragmaticalneſs*. For theſe ſins, among ſeveral others, although they are plain and obvious to an *unprejudiced* and *piercing underſtanding*, which is able to diſcern the grounds and reaſons of things, and fairly to conſider of them: Yet, to ſuch minds as have fallen unhappily under ſome miſtaken notions, and falſe prepoſſeſſions, they are not evident; whence many men, that have honeſt and obedient hearts, do yet err, and judge amiſs concerning them. But then ſeveral other ſins are ſo *open* and *notorious*, that no *ſober mind*, and *virtuous inclination*, can ever have any *doubts* about them.

Thus,

Thus, for inſtance, no honeſt man who is willing fairly and ſeriouſly to conſider things, can ever queſtion, I think, that *killing without Commiſſion from Authority, and due proceſs of Law, is Murther*; that *ſpoils without judicial courſe, are robbery*; that *appearing in Arms againſt the ſupreme Sovereign Power, or men commiſſioned by him, is Rebellion*; that *intoxicating uſe of Wine, is Drunkenneſs*; and a *promiſcous uſe of Women, Adultery or Fornication.* Theſe ſins, and many others, are of ſo open and notorious a nature, that no man of an ordinary wit, if he has any competent degrees of honeſty, can ever apprehend them to be other than damnably ſinful. And if any man has any opinions, which in any caſes juſtifie ſome of theſe, if he continues to hold them ſtill after he ſees how theſe ſins follow from them, which he muſt needs do when he practiſes and incurrs them, becauſe the opinions lead him on to them; 'tis plain that his opinion holds poſſeſſion of his mind, becauſe his heart is wicked: *ſimplicity* and *ignorance*, it may be, gave it entrance; but *ſin* and *diſobedience* enable it to perſevere.

If the man indeed was only *ſimple* and *ſhort-ſighted*, *raſh* and *forward* at the *firſt*, and either had not *underſtanding* or *patience* enough to look on ſo far, as the ſinful conſequences when he gave it entrance; his luſts and vices at that time could have no ſhare in it, becauſe he did not ſee how they could be ſerved by it; and ſo far the ſimplicity of a well-meaning mind, and the obedient temper of an honeſt heart and a good intention, may plead his excuſe for his otherwiſe wicked and diſobedient perſwaſion. But if afterwards he *perſiſts* in it, when he *ſees* all the *iniquity* and *diſobedience* that flows from it, and goes on to cancel and tranſgreſs *notorious* and *weighty Laws* upon the aſſurance of it: 'tis manifeſt then that his *heart is wicked*, and that he is influenced

fluenced more by a *reigning ſin*, than by a *cogent reaſon*. For if his heart were acted by a full reſolution of obedience and a love of Vertue, he would quickly renounce ſuch opinions, when once he ſaw ſuch notorious and unqueſtionable Laws to be overturned by them. But ſince he will ſtick to his wicked Principle, even when it deſtroys obedience, and prefer a diſputable opinion before a weighty and plain Duty; 'tis plain to all, that he is not willing to obey, but induſtrious to ſeek a ſhift, and to evade all obligation to obedience.

As for this enquiry then, *viz.* When our *diſobedient prejudices get into our conſciences by the help of our own unmortified luſts, and damning vices*; from theſe meaſures we may make our own ſouls this Anſwer? If we are *uſually*, and *in the common courſe of our lives, guided by that luſt or vice which our prejudice advances*; if *we ſaw the diſobedient effects of it, when we firſt gave credit to it*; or if *we ſtill adhere to it, after that we have been plainly ſhowed the unqueſtionable, and notorious ſins which are avouched by it*: Our prejudice took place by virtue of our diſobedience, and, without our timely repentance, it will certainly condemn us. If it entred *innocently* and *honeſtly* through the *weakneſs of our underſtandings*, or the *fallibility of the means of knowledge*, it would be pardoned, and not imputed to us: but ſince it gains admittance by our love to damning luſts and diſobedience, it is of a deadly guilt, and, unleſs repentance intervene, will certainly deſtroy us.

And thus at laſt we have ſeen, what ignorance is effected by our prejudices; and what is to be judged of thoſe tranſgreſſions, which are incurred under it. And the ſumm of all is this. That our prejudices make us either *quite overlook ſeveral Laws*, or, *even whilſt we know and conſider of them*, to *venture upon ſeveral diſobedient actions, which really come under them, not knowing*

that

that they do. And if ſuch prejudices entred through the *fallibility of means*, and *weakneſs of an honeſt underſtanding*, they are *pardonable* and *uncondemning*: but if they took place by means of *ſtrong luſts*, and a *wicked heart*, they are *deadly ſins*, and fit to be charged upon us, as all others are, without *repentance*, to our condemnation.

But ſeeing it is much *ſafer*, and infinitely more eligible to have no diſobedient prejudice at all, than to be put into all this danger about the pardon and forgiveneſs of it; before I diſmiſs this Point, I will ſet down one *plain Rule* and eaſie Method, in matters of *Duty* and *moment*, to prevent it. For by this means we may all of us attain, in good meaſure, to that which St. *Paul* aſſures us was his utmoſt care and induſtrious *exerciſe*; *viz.* a *conſcience void of offence*, or rather an * inoffenſive conſcience, which is no ſcandal or cauſe of ſin to us, and which doth not ſtumble and caſt us down into any breach of Duty, either *towards God, or towards men*, Acts 24, 16.

* συνείδησιν ἀπρόσκοπον.

And the *Rule* which I would preſs upon all *ſimple*, and *honeſt minds* for that purpoſe, is this, *Begin with Duty and plain Laws, to make them the meaſure whereby to judge of Notions and Opinions; not with Notions and Opinions, to make them the meaſure whereby to interpret plain Laws.*

For our Duty is made *plain* and *open*, and expreſſed ſo clearly, as that every man may underſtand it. It is no matter of *skill* and *parts* to *know* Chriſt's Commandments; but an *honeſt* and a *teachable heart* is a better preparation to that, than *refinedneſs of wit*, and *philoſophick learning*. For God, who gave us Laws, knew the meaſure of all capacities, and the compaſs of every underſtanding; and what he intended that all ſhould practiſe, he wanted not skill to expreſs ſo plainly, that every one might

might apprehend it. Laws are the Rule of the last Judgment, and our obedience or disobedience to them is a matter of life or death; and that in all reason and equity ought to be revealed clearly and sufficiently to every understanding, which every man must for ever live or die by. As for Laws and Duty then, they are plain and easie; they are expressed in such clear and intelligible words, as carry what God means by them in their usual and obvious acceptation. So that in judging of them, if we begin there, there is no great difficulty; seeing they are easily and obviously understood by any man, who brings along with him an obedient, and teachable mind, to the obvious understanding of them.

But as for *abstract Notions* and *general opinions*, they admit of much *doubting* and *dispute*, and of great *appearance of reason*, and *variety of argument* on *one* side, as well as on the *other*. And besides, *all capacities* are no *fit Judges* of them; but those only which have much *quickness*, and much *experience*; that can dispel the *darkness*, by *clear evidence*; and help the *confusion*, by a *distinct representation* of things; that can judge of *reasons*, and of *exceptions*, and of the *various degrees in evidence*, and the just weight of arguments. So that they are a matter, not for the determination of *common heads*, but for the *learned* and *witty*, for *refined Parts* and *Philosophers*. Yea and even among *them*, by reason of their *difficulty* and *doubtfulness*, they admit of *great disputes*, and beget *generally* much *variety* of *judgment* and *opinion*; wherein if some think true, as it is very possible, nay often happens that neither do, the rest must of necessity be mistaken.

Opinions therefore and *Notions* are more *dark* and *difficult*, less easie to be understood than plain Laws, and much more liable to be mistaken. So that Laws and

and Duty are fit to be made a Principle, becauſe we may eaſily underſtand them, and be well aſſured of them: but general Notions and Opinions, being more dark and liable to errour and miſtake, they are not ſo proper to be themſelves a Rule, as to be meaſured and judged of by them.

And that they ſhould ſo is further reaſonable, becauſe in the very deſigns of God, *obedience* is *primarily* and *chiefly* intended to be *miniſtred* to by *Divine Truths*; not *truths* to be ſerved, and furthered by *obedience*. For the revelation of *religious truth*, is given by the Authour of our Religion himſelf in order to *religious practice*. The very end and perfection of our *Faith* being to produce * *Good Works*, to make us † *overcome the World*, to * *ſave our ſouls*, or to deliver us from our ſins, which are thoſe evils that † Chriſt came to ſave us from. And ſince obedience unto Laws is the *end*, and *general truths* are only *means* whereby to compaſs it; 'tis certain that no truth can ever oppoſe a Duty, or evacuate obedience, becauſe God would defeat his own end in revealing it, ſhould he at any time become the Author of it. So that this cannot be a *proper*, at leaſt it is not a *ſafe* way of arguing; *this plain Law, in ſuch and ſuch parts, and ſorts of inſtances, contradicts a truth, and therefore it is no Duty:* whereas we ſhould proceed quite contrary after this manner; *this or that opinion interferes, and undermines this or that plain Law, ſo that it can never be a true opinion.* For this arguing is *fair* and *likely*, and withal it is moſt *ſecure*. It is ſure to preſerve *obedience*, becauſe it admits of nothing that interferes with it: and it is alſo very likely to preſerve *truth*; for it is moſt certain that no Doctrine can ever come from God, which encourages or juſtifies any wickedneſs; ſo that not only an *obedient heart*, but even a *free* and *impartial reaſon* muſt quit the Principle, if it appear to

* Jam. 2. 22.
† 1 Joh. 5. 4.
* 1 Pet. 1. 9.
† Mal. 1. 21.

draw after it an evil consequence.

To settle Principles and Rules of Judgement then, especially for *simple* and *unlearned* minds, the first enquiry ought to be, not what is *true* or *false*, but what is *good* or *evil*. For since the knowledge of this is more *plain* and *obvious*, *easie* and *accessible* to *all*, but to *them* most especially; 'tis evident, that as all others, so particularly they, if they would secure even *Truth* as well as Duty, must begin with *Laws* as their *Principle*, and from thence make their *inference* to *Doctrines* and *Opinions*. To avoid sinful errours and disobedient prejudices, they must use Laws and Duties, as the measure whereby to judge of notions; not notions and opinions as the standard, whereby to measure and interpret plain Laws.

CHAP. VII.

A sixth cause of ignorance of the present actions being comprehended under a known Law. And of the excusableness of our transgressions upon both these sorts of ignorance.

The CONTENTS.

All the forementioned causes of ignorance of our present actions being included in the known Law, are such to knowing and learned men. Besides them, the difficult and obscure nature of several sins, is a general cause of it to the rude and unlearned. Sins upon this ignorance, as well as upon ignorance of the Law it self, unchosen, and so consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation. Where

Where there is ſomething of choice in it they extenuate the ſin, and abate the puniſhment, though they do not wholly excuſe it. The excuſe for theſe actions is only whilſt we are plainly ignorant: they are damning when we are enlightned ſo far, as to doubt of them, but pardonable whil'ſt we are in darkneſs or errour. This excuſe is for both the modes of ignorance, 1. *Forgetfulneſs;* 2. *Errour. All this pardon hitherto diſcourſed of upon the account of ignorance of either ſort, is no further than the ignorance it ſelf is involuntary. The wilfulneſs of ſome mens ignorance. The ſeveral ſteps in voluntary ignorance. The cauſes of it. Two things required to render ignorance involuntary,* 1. *An honeſt heart,* 2. *An honeſt induſtry. What meaſures neceſſary to the acceptance of this induſtry. Gods candour in judging of its ſufficiency. This diſcourſe upon this firſt cauſe of an innocent involuntarineſs,* (viz.) *ignorance, ſumed up.*

THus upon all theſe accounts, which are mention'd in the *two* former *Chapters*, we ſee it will often happen, that although in the *general we do know the Law which forbids any ſin; yet ſhall we ſtill be ignorant of our preſent actions being comprehended under it.* For the *ſmall, and barely gradual difference between* Good *and* Evil, the *limitedneſs of moſt Laws*, the *indirect obligations which paſs upon ſome indifferent actions*, the *claſhing and interfering of ſome of Chriſts Laws*, ſometimes *with other commands*, and ſometimes *with our own prejudices and prepoſſeſſed Opinions*; are all ſo many reaſons, why, after we *know* the *General Laws* that forbid them, we ſhall ſtill venture upon ſeveral *particular actions, through ignorance of their being forbidden.*

And yet beſides all *theſe*, which are cauſes of ſuch ignorance to the moſt *knowing men*, and to thoſe who

have *great parts* and *learning*: there will be moreover one *great* and *general* cauſe of it to the more *rude* and *ignorant*, and that is the *difficult*, and, to them, *obſcure nature of the ſin it ſelf*, *which in the Law is expreſly*, *and by name forbidden*. For how many of them who hear, it may be, of the Law againſt *cenſoriouſneſs*, *laſciviouſneſs*, *uncleanneſs*, *carnality*, *ſenſuality*, *refuſing of the Croſs*, and *other* things; do not well underſtand what thoſe words mean? Alas! the greater number of men in the world, have but very rude, and imperfect notices of things; they ſee them only in a huddle, and by halves. And as it is in their knowledge of other things; ſo is it in their underſtanding of Sin, and Duty likewiſe. For their ſight and ſence of them is dark and defective, and albeit they have ſome general and confuſed apprehenſions of them, yet is not their knowledge ſo clear and diſtinct, as that they are thereby enabled to judge of every particular action, whether it falls under any of them, or no. And ſince they have but ſuch half, and imperfect notions of ſeveral ſins, it is no wonder, although they know the *General Law*, if they venture upon ſeveral actions which really come under it, not knowing that they do.

And thus we ſee, that beſides the *ignorance of the Law it ſelf*, there is alſo another ſort of ignorance, which will be a cauſe of ſin to ſeveral men of all ſorts, and that is their *ignorance of their preſent actions being comprehended under the letter of the Law*, *and meant by it*.

But now as for *thoſe tranſgreſſions*, which men of an *honeſt heart* are guilty of, through this *ignorance of their own actions being included in the Law*, when they do know the Law that includes it: *They do not put them out of a ſtate of Grace*, *but conſiſt with it*.

For this Ignorance is mens *unhappineſs*, rather than their *fault*; it is not an Ignorance of their own *choo-*

ſing,

ſing, ſeeing their will and choice againſt it. For they *deſire* to be free from it, and *ſtrive* to prevent it, and *endeavour*, according to thoſe abilities and opportunities which God has afforded them, to get right and true apprehenſions of all Gods will, that they may perform; and of every evil action, that they may avoid it. But it is the *difficulty* and *intricateneſs of things* which renders them ignorant, and that is not of their making. For the ſins forbidden are not eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the liberty allow'd, or from the Duty commanded in ſome caſes; and therefore it is that they miſtake them, and are ignorant of the ſinfulneſs of their preſent action, when their knowledge of it ſhould enable them, if they would, to avoid it.

And ſince it has ſo little of their *own will*, and the men, even when by reaſon of their ignorance they tranſgreſs, are induſtriouſly deſirous to know their Duty, and prepared to practiſe it, ſo far as they underſtand it: it ſhall have nothing of *Gods anger*. It is altogether a pardonable ſlip, and a pitiable inſtance, and that is enough to recommend it to Gods mercy. For he is never *rigorous* and *ſevere* in a caſe that is prepared for pity and pardon, ſo that he will not puniſh, but graciouſly forgive it.

And if it were otherwiſe, *who could poſſibly be ſaved?* For this *ignorance of their preſent actions being comprehended in the words of the known Law*, is ſuch as the *wiſeſt* men have been ſubject to; and they, among the reſt, who were moſt eminently skill'd in all the Laws of God. St. *Paul* is not certain, but that ſome ſuch ignorance adhered to himſelf. *I know* or am * conſcious of *nothing by my ſelf*, ſaith he, *but yet I am not hereby juſtified*, becauſe ſome ſuch ſins may have †eſcaped my knowledge,

* σύνοιδα.

† *Nihil mihi conſcius*, &c.

quia lætrat, delicta quis intelligat, &c. *temperabat ſententiam ne fortè per ignorantiam deliquiſſet.* Hieron. Dial. adv. Pelag. lib. 2. p. 284. Ed. Eraſm.

1 Cor. 4. 4. *Why;* says St. † *Chrysostome, should the Apostle say that he is not thereby justified, although he is conscious of nothing by himself wherefore he should be condemned? because it might so happen, that he had committed several acts of sin, which, at the time of acting, for all his knowledge of the Laws themselves, he did not know were sinful.* And this is no more than *holy David the man after Gods own heart,* thought he had reason to suspect himself for before him; *who,* says he, *can understand his errours? cleanse thou me from my secret faults,* Psal. 19. 12. The best men in all times, whether *Jews* or *Christians,* have been subject to miscarriages through this sort of ignorance; and God, who is never wanting to the necessities of his servants, has always provided a sufficient atonement and propitiation for them. For under the *Law,* if any honest *Israelite* happen'd to *do any thing which was forbidden to be done by the Commandment of the Lord,* and *wist not that it was forbidden; Moses* appointed the *Priests to make an expiation for him,* and several atonements for that purpose are set down, *Levit.* 4. And under the Gospel our Saviour Christ, by * *whom Grace* and Favour is said *to be given much more largely* than it was by the *Law of Moses,* has provided us of a much more powerful, and valuable propitiation. He himself, by virtue of his own sacrifice, atones for all such unknown offences; as well as the Jewish Priests did by their Sacrifices, which were prescribed in the Law of *Moses.* For in comparison of the *two* Priesthoods, as to that part of their Office which lay in making these atonements, St. *Paul* assures us, that like as the *Jewish Priests* had, so *Christ can have compassion upon the ignorant,* Heb. 5. 2.

As for those transgressions then, which are therefore *involuntary* and *unchosen,* because we do *not know that the Law which they are against doth comprehend them;* they

† τί δήποτε, εἰ μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ συνοίδεν, οὐ δεδικαίωται; ὅτι συνέβαινεν ἁμαρτήματα μὴ αὐτὸν τινὰ ἁμαρτήματα, μὴ μὰν αὐτὸν εἰδέναι ταῦτα ἁμαρτήματα. Chrysost. Hom. 11. in 1 Epist. ad Cor. c. 4. vers. 4. Tom. 3. p. 307. Ed. Savil.

* Joh. 1. 17.

they ſhall not *finally damn* any man. So long as we have an honeſt heart, that is ready to perform what it knows, and unfeignedly deſirous and induſtrious to know more, that it may perform it likewiſe; if in ſome things ſtill we happen ignorantly to offend, ſuch ignorant offences ſhall not prove our ruine. For our ignorance will excuſe our ſin, and make it conſiſtent with Gods Favour, and with all the hopes and happineſs of heaven.

Nay, even where our *heart is not ſo honeſt* as it ſhould be, and we are ignorant of the preſent actions being comprized under that ſin which the Law forbids through our *own fault*; yet even there our ignorance, although it cannot *wholly excuſe*, doth ſtill *extenuate* our *ſin*, and proportionably *abate* our *puniſhment*. Perhaps it is our *raſhneſs*, or *inconſiderateneſs*, or *violent purſuit of ſome opinions* and *prejudice againſt others*, which makes us judge wrong of ſome particular actions, and not to ſee that they are included in the prohibition of ſome known Law, when really they are. Nay, ſo far may our miſtake go, as not only to judge them to be no ſinful breaches of theſe Laws; but moreover, to be virtuous performances of others. For our Saviour tells his Diſciples, that *the time was coming, when* even *they who killed them ſhould think that* thereby *they did God good ſervice*, Joh. 16. 2. And St. *Paul* ſays plainly, that *he verily thought with himſelf, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth*, Acts 26. 9. All which *murders* and *perſecutions* they were *ignorantly* guilty of; not as if they did not know the Laws againſt *murder* and *perſecution*, but becauſe they thought their preſent actions to be unconcern'd in them, and not forbid by them; nay, on the contrary, to be warranted and injoyn'd by other Laws, requiring *zeal for God*, and *judgment againſt falſe Prophets*.

Now this Ignorance was ſuch, as they might very well

well have prevented had they been *calm*, and *conſiderate*, *humble*, and *teachable*, and would have *hearkened honeſtly*, and with an *even mind*, to that evidence which *Chriſt* gave of his being the *Meſſiah*, which was ſufficient to convince any *honeſt mind*. And this *patience*, *humility*, and *teachableneſs*, were in their own Power to have exerciſed if they would; ſo that they were ignorant in good meaſure through their own choice, and by a *wilful neglect* of thoſe means, which would have brought them to a true belief, and a right underſtanding. And ſince their Ignorance was thus a matter of their own choice, it is their ſin, and they muſt anſwer for it.

But although, being, as I ſay, their own fault, it could not wholly excuſe; yet was it fit to leſſen and mitigate their crime, and to abate their puniſhment. Their account ſhould be leſs by reaſon of their Ignorance, and the ſinful actions, being committed with an honeſt heart through a miſguided underſtanding, were much more prepared for pardon, than otherwiſe they would have been. And this *Chriſt* himſelf has plainly taught us, when he uſes it as an argument with his *Father* for the forgiveneſs of that *ſinful murder* of the *Jews*, whereof they were guilty in his *Crucifixion*. *Father*, ſays he, *forgive them, for they know not what they do*; their killing of me they take to be no ſinful murther of an innocent and anointed perſon, but a virtuous execution of a lying Prophet, *Luk.* 23. 34. And this likewiſe St. *Paul* experienced: *I obtained Mercy*, ſays he, for perſecuting the Church of God, *becauſe I did it ignorantly*, not thinking it to be a ſinful perſecution, but a pious ſervice, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Yea, if the *culpable ignorance* be either of the *Law it ſelf*, or of our *preſent actions being contained under it*; although God ſhould not call us to *repentance* for what we

we ignorantly committed, and ſo to *pardon*; yet even unpardoned we ſhall undergo a much *lighter puniſhment* by reaſon of our ignorance, than we ſhould have ſuffered had we ſinned in knowledge. For in this Point the words of our Lord and Judge are expreſs, *He who knew not his Maſters will, and did things worthy of ſtripes; ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes*, Luke 12. 48.

This allowance the Goſpel makes for our ſinful actions, ſo long as we are ignorant that the Laws, which they are againſt, do include and comprehend them. Whilſt our Conſciences are in *darkneſs* about them, and we do not ſee that we tranſgreſs in them; though that ignorance were in good meaſure *culpably wilful*, we ſhould obtain a *milder puniſhment*; but if it were *involuntary* and *innocent*, we ſhall be *fully acquitted* and *excuſed*.

This allowance, I ſay, there is whilſt *our ſin is ignorant*, and our Conſciences do not ſee that the known Law is tranſgreſſed by our ſinful action.

But if our Conſciences ſhould come to *know ſo much* of the ſinfulneſs of that action which we commit, as to *ſcruple its lawfulneſs*; and to be *enlightned ſo far, as really to doubt of it*: then is the caſe quite alter'd, and we cannot plead that we did it ignorantly, becauſe we knew ſo much by it at leaſt, as ſhould have made us forbear it. For if indeed we *doubted* of it, we knew it was as likely to be a Sin, as to be an innocent Action; becauſe that is properly Doubting, when we ſuſpend our Aſſent, and cannot tell which way to determine, when we judge one to be as likely as the other, and do not poſitively and determinately believe the truth of either. And when this is our caſe concerning any Action, if we venture on it whilſt the doubt remains, we are guilty of ſin, and muſt expect to ſuffer puniſhment. For by ſo doing we ſhew plainly, that

we will do more for ſin, than we will for God, and that it has a greater intereſt with us than he; becauſe even whilſt we apprehend it as likely to be our ſin as our liberty, yet for the ſins ſake we chuſe to venture on it, rather than for Gods ſake to abſtain from it.

This Contempt of God there is in it, in the *Nature of the very thing* it ſelf, although God had no ways expreſſed himſelf concerning it. But we muſt know further, that whenſoever we are in this eſtate of doubt and unreſolvedneſs, God has given us a *peremptory Command*, that *we ſhould not act what we fear is ſinful, but omit it. Abſtain*, ſaith he, *from all appearance of evil*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 22. So that if after all our Diſputes and Demurs, we venture at laſt to commit the Action which we doubted of, we do not only ſlight God by running the hazard of Diſobedience to one Law, whereof we are uncertain; but we wilfully diſobey him in tranſgreſſing of this other Law, whereof we all either are, or may be certain if we will. And if in this eſtate we preſume thus to diſobey, we ſhall be ſure to ſuffer for our Diſobedience.

And in this caſe St. *Paul* is plain. For if there be any thing whoſe lawfulneſs our *Conſciences are unreſolved* and *unperſwaded* of; whilſt that *unreſolvedneſs* remains, he tells us plainly, that our *commiſſion* of it is *utterly unlawful. Whatſoever*, ſays he, *is not of Faith*, or proceeding from a belief and perſwaſion of its lawfulneſs, *is ſin*. So that if it be about the *eating of meats*, for Inſtance, *he that doubts is damn'd*, both of God and of himſelf, *if he eat*, *becauſe he eateth not of Faith*, Rom. 14. 23.

If our minds therefore are ſo far enlightned concerning any ſinful Action, as that we are come to doubt of it, we are no longer innocently, and excuſably ignorant. For we ſee enough by it, to make us chuſe to abſtain

abſtain from it; and if for all this we preſume ſtill to venture on it, ſin lyes at the door, and we muſt anſwer for it. We are no longer within the excuſe of Ignorance, but we are guilty of a wilful ſin, and are got within the bounds of Death and Damnation.

But if in any Action, we know nothing at all of the Law which forbids it; or after we have known that, if we are ſtill ignorant of its being contain'd under it; if we are not come to *doubt*, but are either in *Ignorance*, or *Errour* concerning it; our Ignorance ſhall excuſe our Fault, and deliver us from Condemnation. We do not chuſe the ſin which we do thus ignorantly commit, and therefore we ſhall not ſuffer that Puniſhment which is threatned to it; but our unknown offence is a pardonable ſlip, ſuch as, according to the gracious Terms of Chriſts Goſpel, ſhall ſurely go uncondemned.

And this is true, not only of *ſimple Ignorance*, but likewiſe of the two particular *Modes* of Ignorance, *viz.*

Firſt, *Forgetfulneſs.*

Secondly, *Errour.*

1. Our ſins of Ignorance will be born with, if we venture upon the ſinful Action through *Ignorance of its ſinfulneſs, which we knew formerly, but at the time of acting have forgotten.* For a ſlip of Forgetfulneſs is no more than befel an *Apoſtle*, who was for all that a *bleſſed Saint*, and an *Heir of Life* ſtill. St. *Paul* himſelf reviles the *High-Prieſt*, forgetting both his *Duty*, and that that man *was he* whom he ſpoke to. *I wiſt not, Brethren*, ſays he, *that he was the High-Prieſt*, for had I bethought my ſelf, I ſhould not have ſpoke ſo diſreſpectfully to him, it being thus written, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy People*, Act. 23. 5.

2. Our ſins of Ignorance ſhall be diſpenſed with, if

we are led to commit them through a *miſtake of their innocence, when indeed they are ſinful*, which is an acting of them through *errour*. For no leſs a man than *Peter* was drawn into a ſinful diſſimulation, through an erroneous conceit that his giving no offence, but keeping in with the *Jews* (which was the thing that he aimed at by it) would juſtifie and bear him out in it. For which St. *Paul* tells us, when *he came to Antioch, he withſtood him to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13. But yet for all this St. *Peter* was at that time a *true good Saint*, and, if it had pleaſed God then to call for him, he had been *undoubtedly an Heir of ſalvation*.

And to mention no more upon this Point, as there were conſtant atonements for the errours of the people under the *Law*, ſo is their proviſion made for them under the *Goſpel*. For *Chriſt* who is our *High Prieſt*, as St. *Paul* aſſures us, *can have compaſſion on the ignorant* and * *erroneous*, or *them who are out of the way*, Heb. 5. 2.

* πλανωμένοις.

So long therefore we ſee as our ignorance of any kind, whether of the *Law it ſelf*, or of our *preſent actions being comprehended by it*, is *involuntary* and *innocent*; ſo long ſhall we be *born with* for all ſuch ſlips as we incur under it. For God will never be ſevere upon us for *weakneſs of underſtanding*, or for *want of parts*, whilſt there is nothing in us of a *wicked heart*: and therefore if our ignorance it ſelf is innocent, our offences under it ſhall go unpuniſhed.

But here we muſt obſerve that all this allowance for our ignorance, is ſo far only as it is *involuntary* and *faultleſs*: but if we *chuſe* to be ignorant, our ignorance is in it ſelf our *ſin*, and will make all our following offences *damnable*. For we muſt anſwer for any thing of our own choice; and therefore if we chuſe the ignorance,

rance, we ſhall be interpreted to chuſe, and ſo put to anſwer for, all thoſe ill effects which it produces. Thoſe ſins which are *voluntary in their cauſe*, are interpreted to us, as we have † ſeen, and put upon our ſcore; ſo that if we chuſe the ignorance which brings them, we ſhall be adjudged to ſuffer for them. † Chap. 3.

Now as for the ignorance and errour of many men, which is the cauſe of their ſins and tranſgreſſions, it is plainly of their own *chuſing*. They have a mind to be ignorant of their Duty, and that is the reaſon why they do not underſtand it. For either they *ſhut their eyes*, and will not *ſee* it; or they are *idle* and *careleſs*, and will not *enquire* after it; or they *bend their wits*, at the inſtigation of their luſts, to *diſpute* againſt it, that after they have *darkened* and *confounded* it in their own thoughts, they may *mince* or *evacuate*, *miſtake* or *disbelieve* it. So that if at laſt they do *not know* it, it is becauſe they do *not deſire the knowledge of it*, or *will be at no pains for it*, or *take pains againſt it, to ſupplant and diſguiſe it*. And theſe are they, who are not ignorant againſt their wills, but, as St. *Peter* ſays, *willingly ignorant*, 2 Pet. 3. 5.

And as for ſuch ignorance as this, it will by *no means excuſe us before God*; but if *we* will be ignorant, *God's* will and pleaſure is, that we ſhall *ſuffer for our ſinful ignorance*, and for all *thoſe ſins* that we commit under it, which we *might*, and *ſhould* have ſeen and avoided. For all thoſe Laws, which are ignorantly tranſgreſſed by us, threaten death, and the ignorance, being of our own chuſing, takes nothing off; ſo that death and damnation reſt upon us.

But that ignorance which can be pleaded to excuſe us before God, muſt be an ignorance that is involuntary; an ignorance, which in the *conſtitution of our nature* is impoſed upon us, and is not *choſen* by us.

And

And a right underſtanding of this difference in ignorance being of ſo great moment, I ſhall, before I diſmiſs this Point, obſerve when our ignorance is *voluntary*, and when it is *involuntary*.

Firſt, I will ſhow *when our ignorance is voluntary.*

As for the *knowledge* of our *Duty*, like as of all other things, it doth not ſpring up in our ſouls as an *Herb* doth out of the ground, nor drop into us as the *rain* doth from a Cloud; but it muſt be *ſought* for, and *endeavoured* after, and unleſs we uſe the *means* of acquiring it, we muſt be content to live without it.

The *means of obtaining the knowledge of God's Laws*, and of the *innocence* and *ſinfulneſs of our own actions*, are the *reading of his Word*, the *attendance upon his Miniſters*, the *thinking* or *conſidering upon what we read or hear in our own minds*, and *praying to God to make all theſe means effectual for our information:* and if ever we expect to know God's will, we muſt put theſe in practice.

But now whether we will make uſe of theſe, or no, is plainly in our *own choice*, and at our *own pleaſure*. For if we will, we may * *exerciſe*; and if we will, we may as well *neglect* them. And when both theſe are before us, if we refuſe to make uſe of the means of underſtanding, and wilfully † neglect the methods of attaining to the knowledge of ſin and Duty, good and evil; if we ſit down without the knowledge of Gods Law, it is becauſe we would our ſelves, and our ignorance is a voluntary and a wilful ignorance.

* *Nulli homini ablatum eſt ſcire utiliter quærere, quod inutiliter ignorat, & humiliter confitendam eſſe imbecillitatem, ut quærenti & confitenti ille ſubveniat, qui nec errat dum ſubvenit, nec laborat.* Aug de lib. arbit. l. 3. c. 19. † *Non tibi deputatur ad culpam quod invitus ignoras, ſed quod negligis quærere quod ignoras.* Auuſt. ib.

And this is the *firſt* way of our ignorance's becoming *voluntary, viz.* when it is ſo upon a *voluntary neglect of thoſe means, which are neceſſary to attain knowledge.* And this in the *Schools* is called a * *ſupine, ſlothful, careleſs ignorance.*

* *Ignorantia ſupina.*

rance. And if it be of ſuch things as lay near in our way, and might have been known without much pains, or much ſeeking; it is called **groſs*, or *affected ignorance.*

* *Ignorantia craſſa & affectata.*

But beſides *this* ſort of wilful ignorance of our Duty, through a *wilful neglect of thoſe means, which are neceſſary to the knowledge of it*; there is *another*, which is higher and more enormous, and that is,

Secondly, When we do not only *ſleight the means of knowing God's Law*, but moreover *uſe thoſe of confounding or miſtaking it.*

For our knowledge of things is then made perfect and uſeful, when it is *clear* and *diſtinct*; and our aſſent and belief of things is then gained, when their *evidence is repreſented*, and *duly conſidered of.* But now as for the employing of mens thoughts in *clearing* or *confounding*, *believing* or *disbelieving* of the Laws of God; it is perfectly in their own power, whether to uſe it on *one* ſide, or on the *other.* And commonly it is their pleaſure to uſe it on the worſe. For they will conſider only of the *difficulties* and *intricacies* of Gods Laws, which may *darken* and *diſturb*, *confound* and *perplex* their thoughts about them; and attend only to ſuch *exceptions* as they can make againſt them, which may unſettle their minds, either about the *meaning*, or the *truth* of them: ſo that after all their *reading* and *conſidering* of them, they ſhall not underſtand, but *err* and *miſtake* them. As it happens to all thoſe who have diſputed themſelves out of the knowledge of their Duty, until, as *Iſaiah* ſays, *they call evil good, and good evil, put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs*, Iſai. 5.20.

And when men are ignorant of their Duty, becauſe they choſe thus to endeavour it, and take pains for it; this ignorance is *voluntary*, and *wilful* with a witneſs.

Theſe *two* reaſons of mens being ignorant of their Duty,

Duty, *viz.* their *neglect of ſuch means as are neceſſary to the knowledge of it*, or their *uſe of the contrary means of confounding or diſcrediting it*, are the cauſes of their *wilful ignorance.*

And that which makes them guilty of both theſe, is either the *groſs idleneſs*, or the *profligate wickedneſs of their hearts*, which are wholly inſlaved to ſome beloved luſt or ſin. They are *wretchedly idle*, and therefore they will not learn their Duty, becauſe that is *painful*; they are *greatly wicked*, and ſo care not for the knowledge of the Law, becauſe that would diſquiet them. *Men love darkneſs*, ſays our Saviour, *better than light, becauſe their works are evil; they hate the light, and will not come to it, leſt their deeds ſhould be reproved by it*, John 3. 19, 20. Becauſe they *hate* and *fear* the Law, they *neglect* the means of knowing it; nay, they *pick quarrels* with it, and endeavour all they can to *perplex* or *darken*, to *evacuate* or *diſparage* it.

So that our ignorance is then *wilful*, when we are therefore ignorant, becauſe we *neglect the means of knowledge*, or *induſtriouſly indeavour to be miſtaken.* And that becauſe we are either too *idle to learn*, or too *wicked to care for* the knowledge of our Duty. The *idleneſs* and *wickedneſs of our hearts* is the *firſt ſpring*, and the *neglect of means*, and *induſtrious perverting of the truth*, are the great *productive inſtruments* of our *wilful* ignorance. Which is therefore called *voluntary* and *wilful*, becauſe the *Principle* and the *Inſtruments*, the *motive* and the *means* to it, are both under the *power* and *choice* of our *own wills.*

And *theſe* things making our ignorance *wilful*, *viz.* a *wilful neglect of the means of knowledge*, or a *wilful perverting of thoſe Laws which we are to know:* we ſhall eaſily diſcern,

Secondly, What ignorance is *unwilled* and *involuntary*; namely,

namely, that which implies a freedom from, and an abſence of both *theſe*; ſo that unto it there is required,

Firſt, An *honeſt heart*.

Secondly, An *honeſt induſtry*.

Firſt, In all *involuntary* ignorance, it is neceſſary that we have an *honeſt heart*. We have St. *Paul*'s word for it, that our receiving of the *love of the truth*, is neceſſary to a *ſaving belief*, and *underſtanding* of it. *They who believed not the truth, but believed lies*, fell into that miſcarriage by this means, ſays he, *becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved*, 2 Theſſ. 2.10,11,12. And our Saviour has taught us, that an *obedient heart* is the ſureſt ſtep to a *right underſtanding*. *If any man will*, or is willing to *do God's will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine* which I preach, *whether it be of God*, John 7.17. The heart or will muſt in the firſt place be obedient, and unfeignedly deſirous to know Gods will; not that it may *queſtion* and *diſpute*, but *practiſe* and *obey* it. For a failure here ſpoils all beſides, becauſe the Heart and Will is the Principle of all our actions, and if it be againſt obeying any Law, it will be alſo againſt underſtanding it, and ſo will be ſure to make us neglect, and omit, more or leſs, the means of coming to the knowledge of it. To prevent therefore all wilful defects *afterwards*, care muſt be taken in the *firſt* place that our hearts be honeſt, and truly deſirous to be ſhewn our Duty, be it what it will. They muſt entertain no Luſts, which will prejudice them againſt Gods Laws, and make them willing either to overlook, or to pervert them. But they muſt come with an entire obedience and reſignation, being ready and deſirous to hearken to whatſoever God ſhall ſay, and reſolv'd to practiſe it whenſoever they ſhall underſtand it. Of their ſincerity in which

laſt, beſides their own ſenſe and feeling, they cannot have a greater Argument, than their being careful to be found in the practice of ſo much as they know already, without which it is not to be expected, that they ſhould be perfecter in their practice by knowing more.

This *Honeſty* and *obedience of the Heart* then is neceſſary in the firſt place to make our ignorance involuntary, becauſe we ſhould wilfully omit the means of knowledge, and become thereby wilfully ignorant if we wanted it.

But then as an effect of this Honeſty of the heart, to make our ignorance involuntary and innocent, there is yet further required,

Secondly, An *honeſt Induſtry*. For the knowledge of our Duty, as was obſerved, is not to be got without our own ſearch, but we muſt inquire after it, and make uſe of the means of obtaining it, before we ſhall be poſſeſſed of it. We muſt *read good Books*, which will teach us Gods Will, but eſpecially the *Bible*; we muſt be *conſtant*, and *careful to hear Sermons*; *attend diligently to the inſtructions of our ſpiritual Guides*, whom God has ſet over us for that very purpoſe. We muſt ſubmit our ſelves to be *catechiſed by our Governours*, *taught by our Superiours*, and *admoniſhed by our Equals*; begging always a Bleſſing from God, to ſet home upon our Souls all their inſtructions. And after all we muſt be careful, without *prejudice*, or *partiality*, to think and meditate upon thoſe things which we read or hear, that we may the better underſtand them, and that they may not ſuddenly ſlip from us, but we may remember and retain them.

All theſe are ſuch means as God has appointed for the attainment of ſpiritual knowledge, and laid in our way to a right underſtanding of his Will. And they

are

are ſuch as he has placed in every mans power, for any of us to uſe who are ſo minded. So that if we are ignorant of our Duty through the want of them, we are ignorant, becauſe we our ſelves would have it ſo. But if ever we expect that our ignorance ſhould be judged involuntary, we muſt induſtriouſly uſe all thoſe means of knowledge, which are under the power of our own wills, whereby we may prevent it.

And as for the *meaſures* of this induſtry, (*viz.*) *what time is to be laid out upon it*, and *what pains are to be taken in it*, that is ſo much as in *every one*, according to their ſeveral abilities and opportunities, *would be interpreted an effect of an honeſtly obedient heart, and of an unfeigned deſire to know our duty, by any honeſt man.* For God has not given all men either the ſame *abilities*, or *opportunities* for knowledge; and ſince he has not, he doth not expect the ſame meaſures from them. He doth not reap where he has not ſown, but that which he exacts, is, that *every man according to his opportunities, ſhould uſe and improve that talent*, be it more or leſs, *which was intruſted with him*, as we are taught in the *Parable* of the *Talents*, Mat. 25. And to name that once for all, we have this laid down by our Saviour as an *univerſal maxime* of Gods Government; *unto whomſoever much is given, of them ſhall much be required.* Which is the very ſame equitable proceeding, that is daily in uſe among our ſelves. *For to whom men have committed much, of him they will exact the more*, Luk. 12. 48.

If any man therefore is induſtrious after the knowledge of Gods will, according to the meaſure of thoſe abilities and opportunities which God has given him; he is induſtrious according to that meaſure, which God requires of him. All men have not the *ſame leiſure*, for ſome are neceſſarily taken up by their place and way of life in much buſineſs, ſome in leſs; ſome have their time

at their own diſpoſal, ſome are ſubject to the ordering of others. And all have not the *ſame abilities and opportunities*, for ſome are able by ſtudy and reading to inform themſelves, ſome have conſtant need of the help and inſtruction of others; ſome have moſt wiſe and underſtanding teachers, and may have their aſſiſtance when they will; others have men of meaner parts and attainments, and opportunity of hearing them more ſeldom. But now of all theſe, whoſe leiſure and opportunities are thus different, God doth not in any wiſe exact the ſame meaſure: No, one ſhall be excuſed for what another ſhall be puniſhed; but if every man endeavours according to his opportunities, he has done his Duty, and God has accepted him.

And in the *proportioning* of this, where there is firſt an *honeſt heart*, God is not hard to pleaſe. For he knows that, beſides their Duty, men have much other buſineſs to mind, which his own conſtitution of Humane Nature has made neceſſary; and he allows of it. The endeavours which he exacts of us, are not the endeavours of *Angels*, but of *men*, who are ſoon wearied, and much diſtracted, having ſo many other things to employ us. But he accepts of ſuch a meaſure of induſtry in the uſe of all the means of knowledge, as would be interpreted for an effect of an hearty deſire to know his Laws, by any *honeſt man*. For where there is firſt an *obedient heart*, God will not be *equalled*, and much leſs *out-done* by the beſt of men in pity and kindneſs. Which is the argument, from which our Saviour himſelf concludes that God will give the *holy ſpirit at our prayers*, becauſe that *men* themſelves, who are infinitely below him in goodneſs, *will give good gifts to them that ask them*, Luk. 11. 13.

Let us therefore take care in the firſt place to *ſecure our ſelves of an obedient heart*, and to *give ſuch evidence*

of

of an honeſt induſtry, as any kind hearted honeſt man would accept of; and then we may have juſt reaſon to be confident, that although our *endeavour* is *weak* and *imperfect*, being *much hindred*, and *often interrupted*, yet ſhall it ſtill be eſteemed ſufficient. For *Chriſt* himſelf, who is to judge of its *ſufficiency*, is no *ſtranger* to our *weakneſſes*, but, having felt them in himſelf, he is prone to pity and pardon them in us. He experimented the *backwardneſs of our fleſh*, and the *number of our diſtractions*, and the *tiredneſs of our powers*, and the *inſinuations and ſtrength of temptations*. So that having ſuch an *High Prieſt* to intercede for us at preſent, and to judge us at the laſt day, *who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted himſelf in all points, even as we are: let us come boldly unto the throne of Grace*, as the Apoſtle exhorts us, *that we may obtain mercy*, for what we cannot maſter, as well as *find grace, in a ſeaſonable time of need*, to conquer what he expects we ſhould overcome, *Heb.* 4. 15, 16. And this merciful connivance at our imperfections, and gracious acceptance of our weak endeavours, we may with the greater reaſon and aſſurance hope for; becauſe *Chriſt* our Judge will be moſt *candid* and *benign*, in putting the beſt ſenſe, and in interpreting moſt to our advantage, all thoſe our actions and endeavours, which ſhall then be brought before him. Whereof he has given us a clear inſtance, in that moſt favourable conſtruction which he made of that *Charity*, that was ſhewn unto his *Brethren* by thoſe on his *right hand*, Mat. 25. For although it was not expreſſed to *him*, but only to their *fellow Chriſtians for his ſake*; yet becauſe their kindneſs reached him in the intention of their minds, and what they did to his ſervants for his ſake, they would have done to himſelf much rather could they have met with an opportunity; he reſented it as if it had been really,

really ſhown to his own perſon. For when they ſay unto him, *Lord, when ſaw we thee an hungred, and fed thee; or naked and cloathed thee*, &c. he anſwers, *inaſmuch as ye have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren*, I take the affection for the performance, and interpret it as if *you* had *done it unto me*, verſ. 40.

When therefore the *ſufficiency* of our endeavours after the knowledge of our Duty, is come to be enquired into of our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*; we may be aſſured that it will have a favourable tryal. It is to be cenſured by a *candid*, *equitable*, and *benign judge*, who will interpret it to our advantage as much, nay, more than any *good natured honeſt man* would. So that if our induſtry after the knowledge of Gods will be in ſuch a meaſure, as a candid and benign man would judge to be a ſufficient effect of an obedient heart, and of an honeſt purpoſe; Chriſt will judge it to be ſo too.

And where our Ignorance of any of Chriſts Laws is joyned with an *honeſt heart*, and remains after *ſuch an induſtry*; we may take comfort to our ſelves, and be confident that it is *involuntary* and *innocent*. If we are *deſirous to know Gods Laws*, and *read good Books*, *frequent Sermons*, *hearken to any good inſtructions* which we meet with, and that according to our *opportunities*, and in *ſuch meaſure* as any *good man* would interpret to be an honeſt endeavour after the knowledge of our Duty, if it were to himſelf: if after all this, I ſay, in ſome points we are ſtill *Ignorant*, our Ignorance is *involuntary*, and ſhall not harm us; it is not choſen by us, and therefore it never will condemn us.

And thus we have ſeen what *ignorances excuſe our ſlips* and *tranſgreſſions*, which are committed under them; and when thoſe *Ignorances* are themſelves *involuntary* and *innocent*, ſo as that we may comfortably expect to be

be excuſed upon the account of them. And the ſumm of all that has been hitherto diſcourſed upon this ſubject, is this. That as for the *Laws themſelves*, *all men* muſt needs be ignorant of ſome of them for *ſome time*, and *ſome men* for *all their lives*, becauſe they want either *ability*, or *opportunity* to underſtand them. And as for their *preſent actions being comprehended under them*, that many men of *all ſorts* and *capacities*, after they have *known the General Laws*, will ſtill be ignorant of *it* likewiſe. For as for the *wiſe* and *learned*, the *ſmall* and *meer gradual difference between good and evil in ſome inſtances*, the *allowed exceptions from the generality of others*, the *indirect force and obligation of a third ſort*, and the *frequent claſhing and interfering*, whether of *Laws with Laws*, or of *Laws with their repugnant prejudices and opinions*; will be ſure to make *them* very often *overlook it*. And as for the *rude* and *ignorant*, that, beſides all *theſe* cauſes of ſuch ignorance, which are common to them with learned men, the *difficult* and *obſcure nature of ſeveral Vices and Vertues themſelves*, which are plainly and expreſly forbidden or injoyn'd, will be of force ſufficient to make the *generality* of them, in many inſtances, *not to underſtand* it. And as for the *pardon* and *excuſe* of our ignorance and unknown tranſgreſſions from *all*, or *any* of theſe cauſes; that it is *involuntary* and *innocent*, ſo long as it is joyned with an *honeſt heart*, and remains after an *honeſt induſtry*; and begins then only to be our *wilful ſin*, and an *Article* of our *condemnation*, when *our Luſts or Vices introduce it*, and *we have a mind to it*, and *take no pains againſt it*, or, what is the conſummation and height of all, *induſtriouſly labour and endeavour after it*.

And this may ſuffice to have ſpoken of the *firſt* ſort of *want of Knowledge*, which, as I ſaid above, produces an *uncondemning involuntarineſs*, (viz.) *Ignorance*, when we

we commit sin, because we do not know the sinfulness of our present action, or the Law which we sin against.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Sins consistent through the second Cause of an innocent Involuntariness, viz. Inconsideration.

The Contents.

Consideration is necessary to choice. Some sins are inconsiderate. Three innocent causes of inconsideration. 1. Suddenness and surprize of opportunity. An account of this. The involuntariness of it. Slips upon it are consistent. 2. Weariness of our thinking powers or understandings. An account of this; and of its involuntariness. The consistence of our Transgressions by reason of it. 3. Discomposure or disturbance of them. An account of this. The causes of it are Drunkenness, or a strong Passion. Drunkenness is always our own fault. Our Passions grow strong in us sometimes by our own indulgence, and then they are our damning sin, and we must suffer for the evil that we commit under them: sometimes through the suddenness, and greatness of outward objects; and then they are pardonable, and our inconsiderate slips upon them are excusable. The Passions which have Good for their object, as Love, Desire, &c. cannot by any force of outward objects be so suddenly forced upon us. But the Passions which have Evil, as Grief, Anger, and Fear especially, often are. The reason of this difference. Inconsideration upon the latter excusable, but not upon the former. This difference made by our Saviour

viour, in a caſe where both were criminal. Excuſable ſlips upon diſcompoſure of our thinking powers, are ſuch as proceed from an unwill'd ſudden Grief, or Anger, but eſpecially from a ſudden Fear. No fear is involuntary, but what is ſudden; and ſins upon deliberate fear are damning; but upon unwill'd ſudden Fear, Grief, or Anger, conſiſtent with Salvation. Cautions about inconſiderate ſins to prevent falſe confidence. No ſin is innocently inconſiderate: 1. *Where we have time and an undiſturbed underſtanding.* 2. *Where the ſin is miſchievous, or greatly criminal.* 3. *When we do not ſtrive againſt it. We muſt endeavour againſt all involuntary Failings, though we cannot reſolve againſt them.* 4. *When we are not ſorry after we have committed it, nor beg pardon for it.* 5. *When it is committed with obſervation. A ſummary Repetition of this fourth Book.*

HAving in the foregoing Chapters diſcourſed largely of the *firſt* cauſe of an *innocent involuntarineſs*, viz. *Ignorance of our Duty*, or want of a *general Knowledge*; I proceed now to the *ſecond*, viz. *want of particular Animadvertence* and *Conſideration* of what we know, which is *Inconſiderateneſs*. And this is the *ſecond* way of rendring our Tranſgreſſions *pardonably involuntary*, which I propoſed above; namely, *when in any ſinful action we do not bethink our ſelves, and conſider of its ſinfulneſs.*

It is not *all knowledge* of our Duty, that renders every particular ſin againſt it *choſen* and *voluntary*. For a knowledge that is only *general*, and *at ſuch time as the thing occurs to our thoughts*, and *we are asked the Queſtion*, will not do: but as all our *choice* is of *particular* actions, ſo muſt our *knowledge* be likewiſe. Before we can be ſaid to chuſe a particular action, we muſt ſee and know it particularly; and if we act it without

thinking, we act it also without chusing, seeing all choice is upon sight and knowledge of what is chosen.

But now *this* is the *case* in several of our Transgressions, *they slide from us without this actual application of our minds to them.* For we do not think and consider of the evil of them, when we commit them; and so their sinfulness being unseen, it is withal unchosen. They are of the number of our *involuntary* sins, and such as, implying nothing of our own will, shall have nothing of Gods anger, who will not punish, but graciously bear with them.

And these slips stealing from us without our *considering* and *thinking* on them, or *adverting* in the application of our minds to them; are called by these several names, which are all of the same signification, *viz.* sins of *inadvertency*, *incogitancy*, and *inconsideration.* Which because they are such as, through the weakness of our Natures, we are *continually* subject to, and liable *daily* to incur, are stiled in another word sins of *daily incursion.*

Now as for this *second* sort of sins, our *inconsiderate Transgressions*, they may steal from us *involuntarily* and *innocently* upon as many grounds, as there may be innocent *causes* of *inconsiderate actions.* And as for the unwill'd, and therefore innocent causes of inconsideration, they are reducible to these *three.*

1. *Suddenness* and *surprize of Opportunity.*
2. *Weariness*, and
3. *Discomposure and disturbance of our thinking powers wherewith we should consider,*

1. The *first* cause of inconsideration in our Actions, whereupon we venture upon some sin without thinking or considering of it, is the *suddenness of the Opportunity*, and *the surprize of Temptation.* It falls out unexpectedly, and stays for us at such time, as our minds are

are otherwiſe employ'd; and ſo we act it without conſidering, becauſe it lies ready and prepared for us juſt then, when we have no leiſure for thinking and conſideration. And the *firſt* beginnings of a *ſinful Paſſion*, whether of *Anger*, of *Envy*, &c. and the *unadviſed ſlips of the Tongue*, in *raſh cenſuring*, in *uncharitable ſpeaking*, in *indeliberate backbiting*, and the *like*, generally enter this way. For they come upon us in the *throng of Converſation*, and opportunities are offered for them before we foreſee them; and ſo we ſpring out indeliberately to act and exert them.

And this inconſideration is ſuch as *we cannot avoid*. For we have no freedom of *acting* where we want a freedom of *thinking*, ſeeing we cannot chuſe without conſideration. But as for theſe inconſiderate ſlips, they ſteal from us before we can bethink our ſelves, and ſtay not for our conſideration, but run before it. For our operative Powers, when they are ſpurr'd on by any thing of an *inward deſire*, or of a remaining *corrupt inclination*, (and who, as long as he lives here, can be wholly free from it?) are ready of themſelves to ſpring out into Action and Practice upon the firſt offer of Temptation, and ſtand in need of reaſon and conſideration, not to raiſe and excite, but to reſtrain and repreſs them. So that upon the offer of a fit occaſion, we act many times amiſs before we are aware; and we cannot help it, becauſe we cannot deliberate and conſider of it.

But as theſe ſlips of ſurprize are ſuch as we cannot avoid, ſo are they ſuch withal, wherefore God will not exact a ſevere account of us. He will not *puniſh*, but *pity* us for them, and in great mercy diſpenſe with them.

For they are *neceſſarily incident to all men*; they have been incurr'd by his beſt ſervants, but were never look-

ed upon to be of that provoking nature, as to put them out of his favour, or to interrupt their ſtate of ſalvation and acceptance. Juſt *Noah*, through his ignorance of the ſtrength of Wine, was ſurprized into one ſin; for he was *drunken* before he was aware, or could diſcern what effects the fruits of his *new Vineyard* would have upon him. *Noah drank Wine*, ſays *Moſes*, *and was drunken*, Gen. 9. 21. But this was perfectly a mixture of *ſurprize* and *ignorance*, for his wits had left him before he was aware, and before he ever knew that the Wine, which he drunk, would drive them from him. For it was at his *firſt* planting of a Vineyard, before he underſtood what meaſure of it would cauſe intoxication. *He began*, ſays the Text, *to be a Husbandman, and he planted a Vineyard, and he drank of the wine of his* new *Vineyard, and was drunken*, v. 20, 21. The great Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf, was guilty of one ſudden ſlip towards *Ananias* the High Prieſt, who, whilſt his mind was intent upon his Speech which he was making in his own defence, commanded him to be ſmitten on the face. Upon which unexpected occaſion he was ſurprized into a *ſudden anger*, and into an *unadviſed irreverence*. *God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited wall*, ſays he preſently to him again, *for ſitteſt thou to judge me according to the Law, and* yet *commandeſt me to be ſmitten contrary to the Law?* Act. 23. 1, 2, 3. But as ſoon as ever he had done, he retracts his words, and confeſſes that his Speech was evil; but yet he pleads that it was pardonable, as being altogether unconſidered through the ſuddenneſs of the occaſion. *I wiſt not Brethren*, ſays he, *that he was the High Prieſt*, I did not think of that; for if I had, I ſhould not have ſpoke ſo diſreſpectfully to him, it being thus *written, Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people*, v. 4, 5.

2. Another innocent cauſe of inconſideration, whereby

by we venture upon ſeveral actions without thinking of their ſinfulneſs, is the *natural weakneſs of our faculties* or *underſtandings*. It is the very frame of our Natures, and we cannot help it, for our minds to be tired out by being held long and conſtantly to one thing. We find it is ſo with us in all Studies whatſoever; for let our thoughts be employed upon what we will, they cannot be kept at ſtretch upon it for a long time together, but either we muſt draw them off and relieve them, or elſe they will flag, and fail of themſelves.

But now as for ſome ſins, they are a *continued temptation*. They do not ſoon come upon us, and go off as ſoon again; but they lie before us, and ſtick to us, and for a long time are ſtill alluring and ſolliciting us. And here, although our minds can conſider of them, and watch againſt them for ſome time; yet, by reaſon of their long abode with us, they wax faint at laſt, and grow weary and forgetful: and then the temptation gets ground, and enters when we are not aware, and in ſome thing we prove unadviſed, and yield to it, becauſe we cannot hold out longer to conſider of ſuch things, as ſhould guard and preſerve us from it. Thus in *afflictions* and *ſickneſs*, for inſtance, by the uneaſineſs of his fleſh, and the hardneſs of his condition, a man is tempted to *fret* and *murmure*, and to be *peeviſh* and *repining*. But for ſome conſiderable time he ſtands upon his guard, and his thoughts are in readineſs; and ſo long he repreſſes his paſſion, and keeps it under, ſo that although the ſin be importunately offered, it is not embraced. And if the temptation would paſs off whilſt he ſtands thus prepared to watch againſt it, all were well, and his Vertue would remain in ſafety. But, on the contrary, it is *laſting* and *permanent*, it ſticks to him, and inceſſantly importunes him, and ſo proves a continual

continual ſnare to him. And now if his *mind* would endure to be held *always upon the ſtretch*, and in a continued watchfulneſs againſt it, all were well, and he would keep back from it ſtill. But alas! his Faculties, after a long toil, grow *weary*; and his Powers of thinking, being conſtantly imploy'd, are *ſpent* and *diſabled*; and then his watchfulneſs begins to impair, and his thoughts by degrees to unbend; and whilſt he becomes leſs attent, and leſs careful to oppoſe the Temptation, it wins ground, and prevails upon him when he is not aware: ſo that although he could not at *firſt*, yet he is ſurprized at *laſt* into ſome *impatient thought*, or *peeviſh behaviour*. And the caſe is the ſame in a *continued provocation* to *Anger*, *Luſt*, or *other* ſins.

Now this *wearineſs*, which renders us thus inconſiderate, is no matter of our own chuſing; it is the very frame of our Nature, and not the effect of our will; ſo that we muſt ſubmit to it, and we cannot help it. For the *Soul* in *thinking* and *underſtanding*, uſes *bodily powers*, and they, by exerciſe, are *ſpent* and *waſted*, *weakened* and *enfeebled*: and therefore when by a fixt watchfulneſs and conſideration of one thing, they have been kept long attent, they naturally grow weak and weary, and there is no avoiding it.

And ſince we cannot help it, God will never exact of us that we ſhould; but when he comes to judge us for thoſe ſlips, which were inconſiderate upon this account, he will not puniſh, but in great mercy pardon and bear with us.

And this we find that he has always done. For his *beſt Servants* have been wearied into ſlips of this nature, and yet they have not put them out of a ſtate of Grace, nor made a breach in God's acceptance; but he has own'd and rewarded them as his faithful Servants ſtill.

Job

Job was a man patient to a *Proverb*, and one to whom, by the teſtimony of God himſelf, there was *none equal in the whole earth*; a *perfect and an upright man, one who feared God, and eſchewed evil*, Job 1. 8. But yet this man of admirable Conſtancy and Patience, was *wearied* out of his watchfulneſs by a tedious Tryal of Afflictions, and in that time of his unadviſedneſs, utter'd many things *impatiently* with his lips. For after he had watched ſore by himſelf, and kept ſilence, continuing ſtill his noble Patience when his Friends came to pity him, and ſtood amazed at his condition for *ſeven days*, and *ſeven nights* together: at laſt being overcharged with grief, and wearied off from his guard againſt it, he burſts out into a *raſh* and *fooliſh curſing of the day of his birth*, and into many *repining Queſtions*, and *fretful Anſwers*, Job 2. 12, 13. and *Chap.* 3. But yet notwithſtanding all theſe, and ſeveral other fretful expreſſions of a tired mind, God owns him for his *dear Servant* ſtill, and honours him in the end with a moſt noble mark of a *particular affection*, by accepting of *his Sacrifice for his Friends*, when he would not accept of it *from themſelves*, Job 42. 8.

David, the man after Gods own heart, when in great fear he flies from *Saul*, and after ſeveral eſcapes made from one place to another, could not either weary, or avoid him; being tired out of all patience and compoſure at laſt, begins ſinfully to call in queſtion the *truth* of *Gods promiſe*. For although *Samuel* had * come from God to *anoint* him King, and had thereby in Gods Name aſſured him of the Crown: yet, after a long confidence in Gods Faithfulneſs, he begins at laſt, in the tiredneſs of his ſpirit, to doubt within himſelf whether God would be as good as his word, and to *ſay in his heart*, *I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. 27. 1. which he did, as he himſelf gives the account

* 1 Sam. 16. 13.

count of it, only becauſe the *wearineſs* of his mind, through his continued and repeated dangers, had made him *haſty* and *inconſiderate*. *I ſaid in my haſte*, ſaith he, *I am cut off from before thine eyes*; referring, in all likelihood, to this very caſe, *Pſal.* 31.22.

Good *Aſaph*, by the continuance of his troubles, is wearied into a like offence. For although he guarded his ſpirit well at the beginning, and for ſome time; yet after he had laboured long under his affliction, he breaks out at laſt, in the diſcompoſure of his ſoul, into theſe *repining thoughts* and *diſtruſtful expoſtulations*: *Will the Lord caſt off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever, and doth his promiſe fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* Pſal. 77. 7,8,9. But when once he had got liberty to recollect his thoughts, and to recover again his former guard; he doth not any longer give way to theſe *diſtruſtful ſurmiſes*, but immediately ſuppreſſes and corrects them. *Then I ſaid*, as he goes on, *this is mine own infirmity*, v. 10.

3. A *third* innocent Cauſe of inconſideration in our Actions, is the *diſcompoſure* and *diſturbance of our thinking powers, which ſhould conſider of them.*

Our ſouls, as I ſaid, are united to our bodies, and make uſe of their powers, in their moſt *ſpiritual* actions of *Knowledge* and *Apprehenſion*. And therefore upon any ruffling diſcompoſure in our bodily ſpirits, our thoughts are ruffled and diſcompoſed likewiſe. They ſee nothing clearly at ſuch times, nor have any diſtinct notices of things; but are blunder'd and confuſed, even as our bodily powers themſelves are.

Now that which thus diſcompoſes our bodily ſpirits, ſo as that our ſouls can ſee and conſider of nothing through their diſorder, is either *ſtrong Drink*, or

a

a *ſtrong Paſſion*. For ſo much is all exerciſe of reaſon and conſideration diſturbed and hindred by theſe, that of men in *drink* or in a *high paſſion*, it is uſually ſaid, that they are not themſelves, and that they have not their wits about them.

But although either *Wine*, or any *violent paſſion*, are *ſufficient cauſes* of diſturbance in our ſpirits, and of diſcompoſure in our thinking powers, which unfit us to conſider of what we do during ſuch time as we are diſturbed by them; yet are not both of them *innocent*, and able to excuſe thoſe inconſiderate ſlips which we commit by reaſon of them. For, unleſs it be in ſome rare caſes that ſeldom happen, *drunkenneſs* is always our own fault, and if we ſin unadviſedly through its diſcompoſure, we ſhall certainly ſuffer puniſhment, becauſe that is a diſcompoſure of our own ſeeking.

As for our *paſſions* indeed, they are cauſes of *ambiguous quality*. For ſometimes they grow ſtrong in us by our *own fault*. Either we feed them, or we indulge them; we ſuggeſt ſuch things to them as will foment them, or we permit them to grow unruly of themſelves, without checking and repreſſing of them, as we might and ſhould, were we ſo minded. And when our paſſions are thus indulged, and the violence of them is of our own chuſing; they are themſelves our *ſin*, and ſo cannot plead our *excuſe* and *vindication*.

But then at other times they are *forced upon us by the power and ſuddenneſs of outward objects*, whether we will or no. For we hate them, and are afraid of them; and, if we were aware, we would ſtand upon our guard, and call in againſt them all the Aids of Reaſon and Religion, to preſerve us from being too much diſturbed by them. But God's Providence caſts them upon us on the ſudden, ſo that we do not ſee them before they come, nor can conſider aforehand to prevent and a-

void them. And when once they are come, by their very natural force in disturbing of our Spirits, they take away from us all power of consideration. So that they are unconsidered in *themselves*, and unconsidered in their *effects*, and therefore they are involuntary all the way. And when our passions are made violent this way, *viz.* by being raised in *us*, not by any thing of our own *search* or *indulgence*, but by the *timing of God's Providence*, and by the *suddenness* and *greatness of outward objects*, they are *pardonable in themselves*, and will *excuse our inconsiderate transgressions*. Those slips, which we incur under them, are prepared for pardon, because we did not seek, nor could avoid them.

Thus then our innocent Discomposures, which unfit us for consideration, are those only which are caused in us by strong passions not of our own indulging. The passion which begets them must enter against our wills, through the *greatness* and *suddenness of outward objects*; it must be forced upon us suddenly and by surprize, and then we cannot refuse it, or the discomposure which ensues upon it, because we have no time beforehand wherein to consider how to prevent it.

Now it is not every passion, which the power of outward objects can force upon us on such a sudden. For *love*, *desire*, and all those passions which have *good for their object*, are more under our own Command, and spring up in us more *gradually*. They arrive not to such a discomposing pitch in a moment, but they require more time, and go on more leisurely; and in all the intermedial steps they are subject to our own power, so that we may arrest them, if we please, before they have got so far. And therefore all the inconsideration, which they effect in us, is more or less wilful, and a matter of our own choice, because it proceeds from our own permission and indulgence.

But then as for other paſſions, of *grief*, *anger*, and *fear* eſpecially, which have *evil* for their object; if the *opportunity be ſudden*, and the *object great enough*, they may be raiſed in us to ſuch a degree, as to *amaze* and *confound us in a moment*. A man may be in ſuch a fright upon the ſudden, as not to know what he doth, as we ſee by daily experience; and the caſe is the ſame in the others likewiſe. And the reaſon of this difference, between *theſe* paſſions and the *former*, is this; becauſe the *ſuffering of evil* is far more repugnant to *ſelf preſervation* and *ſelf-love*, which are the fundamental principle of all our paſſions, than the *abſence of good*. For if we ſit without that good which would move our *love* and *deſire*, we are ſtill where we were: but if we fall under that evil, which excites our *fear*, we are made miſerable, and much the worſe: that is only a denial of a farther delight; but this is a real deprivation, and a ſtep towards deſtruction. And ſince our ſelf-love and ſelf-preſervation are ſo much more nearly concerned in the ſuffering of evil, than in the abſence of good; our paſſions, which are only their ſeveral aſpects and expreſſions, muſt needs be more quick and violent in that than they are in this, and the diſcompoſure upon them will be ſo likewiſe.

This difference there is betwixt our *inconſiderateneſs* upon the *violent fears of evil*, and upon our *violent deſires* and *purſuit of good*. Which is obſerved by our *Saviour* in an inſtance, where both were *criminal*; in which notwithſtanding the diſcompoſure upon the *fears of evil*, being fit to plead the more excuſe, made the tranſgreſſion that enſued upon it to be a leſſer ſin. For both the *Jews* and *Pilate* concurred in the grievous ſin of ſhedding *innocent blood*, when they *crucified* and *murthered him*. In which wicked action, that which moved *them*, was * *envy* and *malice*; but that which prevailed

* Mat. 27. 18.

vailed with *him*, was his *fear of their calumnies*, and of the *anger of the Roman Emperour*. For in his *own heart* * John 18,38, 39. he was minded to * *releaſe him*, being *convinced of his in-* † John 19. 8. *nocence*, and † *afraid* to have any hand in the Blood of one, who *called himſelf the Son of God*. But becauſe he * John 18.33. *called himſelf a King*, which his own * mind could not † John 19.12, 13. but ſuggeſt to him, as the † *Rabble* did afterwards, was a Title whereof the Emperour would be extremely jealous: therefore he gives him up to their will, fearing leſt if he did not, he ſhould be traduced as no Friend to that moſt jealous Prince *Tiberius Cæſar*. And when *Chriſt* himſelf comes to paſs Judgment, in compariſon of *his* offence, and *theirs*, *He who delivered me unto thee*, ſaith he, *hath the greater ſin*, Joh. 19.11.

Thoſe diſcompoſures then of our knowing Faculties, which are innocent, and fit to excuſe our inconſiderate ſlips which proceed from them; are ſuch as ſpring from an *unwill'd ſudden grief*, or *anger*, but eſpecially from an *unwill'd ſudden fear*.

To make it *unwill'd*, I ſay, it muſt be ſudden; for if our *fear* it ſelf, which is a paſſion that amazes more than all the reſt, doth not preſently effect any thing, but ſtays ſome conſiderable time, and reigns long before it produces any ſinful action: then it is a matter of our *own choice*, being it is a fear of our *own indulging*. We give it room and entertainment, we feed it, or give way to it; and that makes our fear to become our ſin, which can never ſerve for our vindication.

For a true *Chriſtian* muſt be as *bold* as a *Lyon*, and fear nothing ſo much as the *diſobedience of his God*, and the *breach of his Duty*. But as for other things, which men uſe to be afraid of, whether they be loſs of *Fame*, of *Eſtate*, of *Friends*, of *Liberty*, or even of *Life* it ſelf; though he may juſtly fear and avoid them, when he can *innocently*; yet if they are the *burden of the Croſs* im-

impoſed upon the doing of his Duty, he muſt chearfully * *take it up,* and not fear and fly from, but overlook and contemn them. For God will make us an abundant Recompence in the next World, for any thing which we part with for his ſake in this. And therefore he indiſpenſably requires us, as in all reaſon he very well may, not to fear and ſhrink from the loſs of any thing, even of life it ſelf, when he calls for it; but in Faith of his Promiſes, and in hope of his Rewards, moſt couragiouſly to undergo it. *Perſecutions* and *Dangers,* which are the great objects of our fears, are the chiefeſt tryals of our obedience, for which reaſon they are ſo often in Scripture called † *Temptations*; and therefore their buſineſs is to evidence how much we will part with for obedience, but by no means to excuſe us when we diſobey. But in relation to them, Chriſts command is this: *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul; but fear him, who can caſt both body and ſoul into Hell,* Mat. 10.28. And if we ſuffer our fears of them to chaſe us away from the owning of his Religion, or to drive us from the performance of his Will; his Sentence againſt us is plain and peremptory: *Whoſoever is aſhamed of me and my words,* and dare not own them, although it be *in a Generation* that is *ſinful and adulterous,* wherein he will be ſure to ſuffer for the profeſſion of them; *of him ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father with his holy Angels,* Mark 8.38.

* Mat. 16.24, 25. and Chap. 10. ver. 37.

† 2 Pet. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Jam. 1. 2, 3.

As for all *Fear* then *which drives us from our Duty,* it is our *fault*; and if we *ſtand* and *pauſe* upon it, and have time to *deliberate* and arm our ſelves againſt it; if we fear ſtill, our fear is our *wilful* and *deadly ſin,* and doth not *excuſe,* but *deſerve our condemnation.* And ſuch was the *fear of Peter,* that made him *deny his Lord,* which coſt him ſo many *penitential tears* to waſh off the ſtain of it, *Mat.* 26. 75. And, in an inſtance of a ſmaller crime,

crime, such was the *indulged fear of Abraham*, when to *save his own life*, he exposed his *wife Sarah*, and *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, to the danger of an *adulterous mixture*, Gen. 12. 11, 12, 13, 15, &c. Concerning which action, St. *Chrysostome* thus discourses: * *He participates in the Adultery of his wife, and doth in a manner minister to the Adulterer unto his wife's reproach, only that he himself may avoid a present death. And this he did, because his mind was still subject to the Tyranny of death, the sting of it was not yet taken out, nor his fears of it subdued; but the face of it was ghastly and terrible above his courage.* And a like sinful practice upon a *deliberate fear* we meet with in *Isaac* in the *same case*, who was a *true Child of Abraham* in his *infirmities*, as well as in his *piety*, Gen. 26. 7.

* Τῇ μοιχείᾳ τῆς γυναικὸς αἱρεῖται κοινωνῆσαι ὁ δίκαιος, καὶ μυνοιχὶ ὑπηρετῆσαι τῷ μοιχῷ εἰς τὸ τῆς γυναικὸς ὕβριν, ἵνα τὸν θάνατον διαφύγῃ. And that because ἕπω ὢν καλαλυθεῖσα τῷ θανάτῳ ἡ τυραννίς.

ἀλλ' ἕπω ὢν τὸ κέντρον αὐτοῦ σεσβέν. ἔτι γὰρ φοβερὸν ὢν αὐτῷ τὸ πρόσωπον. Chrysost. Homil. λβ'. in Gen. c. 12. v. 12, 13. p. 259, 260. Tom. 1. Ed. Savil.

But that *Fear*, or *Grief*, or *Anger*, which makes an *excusable* and *innocent discomposure*, must be *sudden* and *surprizing*. It must seize on us suddenly, and disturb our thinking powers unawares, and carry us on to transgress, before we can recover our selves from the discomposure. And when it doth so, it is forced upon us, and is not chosen by us; we are hurried into it without our own consent, and cast upon it whether we will or no: and since the inconsideration it self is thus involuntary, the slips upon it are excusable, and such as God will not severely punish, but has been always prone to pardon and dispense with.

David, the man after Gods own heart, when he received the sad News of *Absoloms being slain*, was *suddenly transported* into a most *impatient*, and *indecent height of sorrow*, 2 Sam. 18. 33. and Chap. 19. v. 2. 4.

Sam-

Samuel, who was a perſon ſo dear to God, that if he could be * *intreated* by any man, he tells us it would be by *him*, or *Moſes ſtanding to intercede before him*: did yet in an inſtance that would have drawn him into the *hazard of his life*, *diſpute Gods Command* when he ſhould have *performed* it, and *queſtion* where in duty it became him to *obey*. For when God bid him *go* and *anoint David King*, which ſervice was ſure to draw upon him the *cruel* and *implacable hatred* of *Saul*, through the ſudden force of that frightful thought, inſtead of *obeying*, he *anſwers again*, ſaying, *How can I go? for if Saul hear of it, he will kill me*, 1 Sam. 16. 1, 2. And alike inſtance we have of *Moſes*'s *infirmity*, when God was for ſending him upon an Errand as hazardous, and much more difficult, *viz.* his *deliverance* of the *poor oppreſſed Iſraelites* from the cruel *Bondage* of the *powerful Egyptians*, Exod. Ch. 3, & 4. * Jer. 15. 1.

And *Paul* and *Barnabas*, two great *Apoſtles*, and moſt eminently pious Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, in the *bitterneſs of diſpute* and † *heat of quarrel*, are ſo haſty and unadviſed, as, through the ſudden reſentment of that conteſt, to *ſeparate companies* and *part aſunder*, Act. 15. 37, 38, 39. † παροξυσμός.

And ſince theſe ſlips of inconſideration, through a *ſudden Grief*, *Fear*, or *Anger*, were incident to the moſt *perfect Saints*, and the *moſt aſſured Favourites* and *Heirs of Heaven*; 'tis plain, that they are a fit matter of Gods mercy, and will be graciouſly born with and forgiven, but not ſeverely puniſhed by him.

As for our *ſlips of inadvertence* then, and *inconſiderate tranſgreſſions*, whether we are inconſiderate through *ſurprize*, or *wearineſs*, or *diſcompoſure of our thinking Faculties*, they are ſuch *innocently involuntary ſins*, *as ſhall not at the laſt Day be charged upon us*; they do not *unſaint a man*, or *deſtroy a ſtate of Salvation*; but *conſiſt with it*.

But

But to prevent mens *falſe confidences of pardon*, and *groundleſs hopes of being excuſed* upon this head; I think fit to ſubjoyn theſe *Cautions* about inconſiderate ſins.

1. No ſin is innocently inconſiderate, *where we have time*, and *our underſtandings, being undiſturbed, are able to make uſe of it*.

If we have *Time* to think, but our minds are *troubled* and *diſtempered*, which makes them unfit to think and conſider in it, as it happens in the caſes of a *great wearineſs*, and a *violent ſudden paſſion* mentioned above; there 'tis true, we have no choice, becauſe we have not all that is neceſſary to conſideration. But if we have *ability* and *power*, as well as *time* and *leiſure*, our thoughts are at our own choice, and, if we tranſgreſs inconſiderately, the fault is our own; for we might have helped it if we would, and if we will not, we muſt anſwer for it.

2. No ſin is innocently inconſiderate which is of a *miſchievous nature*, and *greatly criminal*. For if a man has not brought himſelf into a *habit of ſin*, and under a *great hardneſs of heart* (which is always his own fault, and ſubjects him to a moſt dreadful puniſhment) his own Soul muſt needs *give back*, and his *Conſcience boggle* at every *great offence*; and where he doubts and demurs, he cannot ſay he is raſh and inconſiderate. No man therefore can be guilty of an act of *Idolatry*, *Blaſphemy*, *Perjury*, *Sacriledge*, *Adultery*, *Murder*, *Sedition*, *Rebellion*, *Theft*, *Slander*, or any other of thoſe ſins, which are ſo great a Terror even to *Natural Conſcience*; and yet ſay he *wiſt it not*, and ventured on them when he did not think of it. For if his Conſcience had any thing of that *tenderneſs*, which it ſhould and would have, unleſs he has ſinned it into *numbneſs* and *ſtupefaction*, he could not commit any of theſe without *checks of mind*, nor ever come to be guilty of them

them, without *fears* and *doubtings*, *diſputes* and *conflicts* in his own ſoul. He muſt conſider them over and over, and view them on one ſide and on the other, before he can be able to maſter his own fears, and work himſelf into courage ſufficient to venture on them.

As for *leſſer* ſins indeed, a mans Conſcience has not ſo quick a ſenſe, nor ſo great a dread of them; and therefore he may be ſurprized ſometimes into the commiſſion of them, before he conſiders of them. A good man may ſpeak a *raſh word*, and be *careleſly angry*, or *triflingly peeviſh*, through *ſurprize* and *ſuddenneſs*; but he cannot *contrive the death of his neighbour*, or *ſtab a man to the heart*, *without fear* and *conſideration*. He may be inſnared unawares into a *wanton eye*, or a *laſcivious thought*; but he cannot fall into an act of *fornication* and *adultery*, till he might look about him, and ſhould bethink himſelf. He may raſhly and unadviſedly be guilty of an *uncharitable cenſure*, of a *ſurly behaviour*, of a *diſcourteous*, *uncondeſcenſive*, *uncandid* action: but he cannot *ſlander his neighbour*, or entertain *malice*, *wrath*, and *implacable enmity* againſt him, without deliberation, unleſs it be his own fault that he will not deliberate, and conſider of them. He may run before he bethinks himſelf into a *covetous wiſh*, but not into *fraud* and *circumvention*, into *theft* and *robbery*, into *perfidiouſneſs* and *oppreſſion*: and the like is obſervable in other inſtances. Theſe *leſſer* ſins, which are acted in more *haſte*, and need leſs deliberation, becauſe mens conſciences are leſs ſenſible and afraid of them, men may, and very often do commit inconſiderately and unadviſedly; they are ſurprized into them before they bethink themſelves, and conſider of them.

But then as for *greater ſins*, which either *imply thought* and *contrivance*, or *require time* and *leiſure*, or, for the heinouſneſs of their guilt, are *frightful unto conſcience*;

we can have no excuſe of inconſideration, when we fall under them. Some, I ſay, *imply thought* and *contrivance*, as *fraud* and *circumvention*; others *require time*, and a long ſtay upon the very commiſſion of them, as *rapes* and *adulteries*, *thefts* and *robberies*, *drunkenneſs* and *revellings*, *wrath*, *anger*, and *malice*; and all of them are *frightful* and *terrifying* to any *honeſt*, and *truly tender Conſcience*. And when we think and contrive for them, or dwell long upon them, or are frighted with them, and put into doubts and diſputes, fears and demurs about them; it is groſs non-ſence, and abſurd contradiction to ſay that we did we wiſt not what, and committed them when we could not conſider of them. So that as for any ſin, which is of a *miſchievous nature*, or *greatly criminal*, unleſs it be our own fault, and we have made our Conſciences hard and callous, we cannot venture on it without conſidering it, becauſe we cannot act it without checks and fears of Conſcience about it.

3. No ſin is innocently and involuntarily inconſiderate, which *we do not endeavour and ſtrive againſt*. To *endeavour* againſt all ſin is in our own power, and at our own choice, although it be not perfectly to *overcome* it, and get free from it. For our endeavours are our own, and are either put forth, or omitted at our own pleaſure; ſo that it is only becauſe we would have it ſo if they are wanting. And therefore if we are inconſiderate becauſe we refuſed, and wilfully neglected to prevent it; our inconſideration enters upon our own choice, and is ſo far owing to our own will. For we were willing to come under it, and would not ſtrive againſt it; and ſo far as it was willed by us, it may be charged upon us, and imputed to condemn us.

Let no man therefore indulge himſelf in an inconſiderateneſs of ſinning, and take no pains againſt it, but quietly

quietly ſubmit to it, out of a fond conceit of being excuſed upon his inconſideration. For if he make no oppoſition to his inconſiderateneſs, but careleſly lays himſelf open to it, and idly waits for it; he makes it ceaſe to be wholly his infirmity, and in ſome meaſure to become his fault. Becauſe it is ſo far an effect of his own will, as it is of his wilful negligence; and as he wills it, he ſhall not be excuſed, but put to anſwer and account for it.

But if any man expect to have his inconſiderate ſlips excuſed as involuntary and innocent, he muſt not indulge to them, or quietly wait for them, but ſeriouſly endeavour, and ſtrive againſt them. 'Tis true indeed, he cannot *reſolve againſt all*, becauſe he cannot *live free from all*; and what a man cannot perform, it is downright folly, and groſs abſurdity to reſolve upon the performance of. No man in his wits reſolves to be as *wiſe* as *Solomon*, to *ſupport a Mill-ſtone*, by his own ſtrength, or to *deſtroy* a *vaſt Army* by his *ſingle valour*. For ſince theſe things cannot be done by him, if he underſtands what he doth, he cannot reſolve to do them. And therefore as for the being wholly freed from all infirmity, and never falling by inconſideration; it is utterly abſurd for any man to reſolve upon it, becauſe no man can ever attain unto it. But although we cannot reſolve againſt all inconſiderate ſlips, yet can we endeavour to get quit of them, and ſtrive againſt them. For *we may endeavour to do what is not to be done*; and do as much of it as we can, although we are not able to do it all. Saint *Paul* himſelf *endeavoured*, and exhorts *all others who were perfect* to ſuch acceptable degrees as he was, to endeavour with him after a a ſtate of *abſolute perfection*, although none of them all would ever be able in this life to arrive to it, *Phil.* 3. 14, 15. They could not reſolve upon it indeed, becauſe they could not com-

paſs it; but they could, and ought to endeavour after it, and to attain ſo far as they had power, when they could not ſo far as they deſired. And after that rate muſt we ſtrive againſt all inconſiderate tranſgreſſions alſo. For although we ſhall never get wholly free from them, yet ſtill muſt we take pains againſt them; and if they ſeize upon us through a neglect of our own endeavours, they ſeize upon us through our own will; and then they are unfit to be judged involuntary.

4. No ſin is *innocently* and *involuntarily inconſiderate*, except *we are ſorry after we have committed it, and beg Gods pardon for it. When thou art reproved* for thy raſh and unadviſed miſcarriages, ſays the wiſe Son of *Sirach*, *ſhew repentance*; and *ſo ſhalt thou eſcape* the guilt of *wilful ſin*, Eccluſ. 20. 3. *Ariſtotle* has long ſince obſerved, That *ignorance* it ſelf doth not render an action *involuntary*, unleſs we are *troubled* at it afterwards, when we come to underſtand it. For * *that act of ignorance only is involuntary*, ſays he, *which we afterwards with grief repent of.* When we come to know that evil which we ignorantly committed, we muſt have an indignation at it, and beg Gods forgiveneſs of it; and then both our inconſideration, and ignorance may be judged involuntary and innocent; but without that in reaſon they cannot. For if our wills are not diſpleaſed with our offence, when once we come to diſcern our ſelves guilty of it, nor ſeek, by begging Gods pardon, as far as may be to undo it; it is manifeſt that really they were not againſt it. They did not chuſe it, 'tis true, when it was acted, becauſe then they were not made to ſee it; but afterwards they make it their own as much as may be, by ſhowing how readily they are bent and enclined for it. They are not at all ſorry for it, nor repent of it, but take a pleaſure and delight in it; and what can any Body judge from thence, but that they avow it.

* ἀκούσιον δὲ τὸ ἐπὶ λυπῃ, ὃ ἐκ μεταμελείας. Ariſt. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 3. c. 1.

If

If therefore we would have it thought, that our ignorance and inconſideration was at any time againſt our wills, we muſt evidence *that*, by ſhowing how much we are troubled, and diſpleaſed with it. Our wills muſt expreſs their diſlike of it, and utterly diſclaim and renounce it; or elſe it will readily be inferred, that they either had, or would have had a hand in it.

After all *theſe marks* whereby to judge of an *innocently*, and *involuntarily inconſiderate ſin*; I preſume I have no need to add, that it muſt be ſuch as is *unobſerved when we venture on it*. For if we ſee and obſerve it, it is not poſſible that it ſhould be any longer inconſiderate. And therefore no man may look upon his ſin, and ſay, Is it not a little one? and yet after that venture to commit it, with a confidence of being excuſed for it. For no *known* and *wilful ſin* is little in Gods account, whatſoever it be in *ours*, but *every offence with open eyes, and with a convinced Conſcience, is deadly and damning*. The man that preſumed wilfully and wittingly to *carry a burthen of Sticks upon the Sabbath Day*, under the Law of *Moſes*, was † *ſtruck dead*, as ſurely as he would have been for *going to plough*, or *trading at the market*. Although this ſeem to be a *little inſtance*, yet was it no *ſmall offence*; for be the matter that a man diſobeys in what it will, yet a *contempt of God*, and a *wilful rejecting of his Law, can in no caſe be little*. And therefore if at any time we ſee and obſerve a ſin, we muſt by all means avoid it; or elſe our willing offence will certainly ſubject us to the curſe, and prove of a ſize ſufficient to condemn us. † Numb. 15. 36.

And theſe are ſuch *Conditions*, as are neceſſary to make our *inconſiderate ſlips involuntary* and *innocent*. And therefore as ever we expect that the forementioned inadvertencies ſhould excuſe us, we muſt take care that they have all theſe requiſites. We muſt never *be guilty*

of

of them where we have time and understanding, nor *in any great and mischievous sin*, nor *without a serious endeavour against them before*, and a *sorrowful repentance* and *desire of pardon after we have committed them.* All these must concur in us, before our inconsiderateness excuse our sin, and rescue us from danger of Damnation.

And now I have gone through both the Particulars of our *involuntary*, because *unknown*, *sins*, whether their involuntariness proceeds from *ignorance*, or *inconsideration*; neither of which shall be rigorously dealt with, or imputed to us for our Condemnation.

And thus at last we see, what in the beginning of this *Book* I proposed to inquire of; *viz. what are the mitigations of that integrity of obedience which is the Gospel-condition of happiness, and what are those defects, which it bears and dispenses with.* And the result of all is this: *That the integrity of obedience, which the Gospel indispensably exacts of us, is an integrity of our chosen actions.* And therefore *if wittingly and wilfully we transgress any one Commandment, we are under the Curse which the Gospel threatens; but if we transgress several unwittingly and against our wills, we are out of the reach of it, and intire in Gods account still.* We do not lose our integrity, or break the condition, *by every slip of ignorance*, whether that whereof we are ignorant be *some Law that forbids any sin*, or *our present actions being forbid by it*: nor *by every slip of inconsideration*, whether our inconsiderateness proceed from *suddenness* or *surprize*, from *weariness*, or from the *discomposure* and *disturbance of our thinking Faculties.* For not any of these failings will *deprive us of that, which Christs Gospel will construe to be a perfect, and intire obedience*; they do not *destroy a state of Grace* and *Salvation*, but *consist* with it.

And

And all theſe *allowances* the Goſpel makes to our *ſinful actions*; beſides ſome others to our *thoughts* and * *deſires*, which are ſin only in an *imperfect birth*, and not yet arrived to the guilt of a *compleat tranſgreſſion*; as I ſhall have a fit occaſion to ſhow, in anſwering of thoſe *groundleſs doubts* and *ſcruples, that perplex good and honeſt, but weak minds*, which ſhall hereafter follow.

* See Book 5. Chap. 4.

But the great Condition of the Goſpel being nothing leſs than an *intire Obedience*; and the generality of men being ſo *maimed*, and *defective in obeying*: what ſhall become of them? For who is there but at one time, or other, has wilfully tranſgreſſed ſome of thoſe Laws, which I have deſcribed; and therefore if the Curſe take place upon every wilful offence, then wo be to all Mankind.

And ſo indeed it would, if *Chriſt* had not taken pity on us, and come into the World for this very purpoſe, that he might ſuccour and relieve us. But the very end of his coming amongſt us, was to find out a remedy for all theſe evils. He came to reſcue us from the Curſe of the Law, and to procure for us new Terms, and put us in a capacity of Pardon. So that whatſoever his Laws threaten, or whatſoever we have committed; yet are we ſtill ſecure from ſuffering, if we make uſe of his remedy, *i. e.* if we *repent* of it; as ſhall appear in the *next* Book.

BOOK V.

Of thoſe Remedies which reſtore men to a ſtate of Salvation when they are fallen from it; and of ſome needleſs Scruples concerning it.

CHAP. I.

Of Repentance which reſtores us to Gods Favour after Sins of all ſorts.

The CONTENTS.

The Rigour of the Moſaick Law is taken away by Chriſt, who came to preach Pardon upon Repentance, where that denounced an unavoidable puniſhment. Repentance is the great Remedy. God heartily deſires mens Repentance, and promiſes Forgiveneſs to it. This has been preached in all times. The Remedy for our unknown ſins. They are uncapable of a particular Prayer and Repentance, but are forgiven upon a general one. The Remedy of wilful ſins is a particular Repentance. That is available for their pardon; for wilful ſins after Baptiſm, as well as before it. Two places, which ſeem to deny all pardon to wilful ſins after Baptiſm, cleared; the wilful ſin, Heb. 10. 26, *is not any wilful tranſgreſſion of any particular Law of Chriſt, which have all been pardoned; but a wilful Apoſtaſie from his whole Religion, which is proved from ſundry*

dry things there ſpoken of it. The falling away mentioned Heb. 6. *is likewiſe Apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity, which is ſhewn from thoſe things which they are ſaid to fall from, and thoſe others which are ſaid to be implied in their falling. An account of the deſperate ſtate of theſe men. The ſtate of ſome habitual Sinners deſperate and irreclaimable, by reaſon their period of Grace is over, but this is no diſcouragement to any mans Repentance.*

HAving hitherto inſiſted largely upon that *Integrity of Obedience*, which the Goſpel indiſpenſably requires of every man to his Salvation; and upon thoſe *Defects*, which either *deſtroy*, or *conſiſt* with it: I proceed now to inquire *what Remedies it directs us to for recovering a ſtate of Grace and Favour, when at any time we happen to fall from it.*

Among the *Jews*, according to the ſtrictneſs of the Law of *Moſes*, the puniſhment took place upon the firſt wilful breach; and therefore in thoſe Laws which were eſtabliſhed under pain of death, when it appeared by ſufficient evidence, that any man was guilty of the wilful tranſgreſſion of them, the Sentence was unavoidable, and the man dyed without mercy. *He that deſpiſed Moſes's Law*, ſaith the Apoſtle, if it were in an inſtance whereto the Law threatned death, *dyed without mercy*, being convicted *under the hands of two or three witneſſes*, Heb. 10. 28. A man that had committed *Murder*, or *Adultery*, or any other crime, whereof *Death* was the *eſtabliſhed Penalty*, was to dye without all remedy; for no *Sacrifice* would be accepted for him, nor would the Law admit of any *favour* or *diſpenſation*. And therefore *David*, when he made his Penitential Pſalm for *murdering Uriah*, and *adulterating his Wife*, expreſſes the *Legal unpardonableneſs* of his of-

fence in theſe words—*thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give it; but thou delighteſt not in burnt-offerings* for ſuch ſins as I ſtand guilty of. No, my crimes are of that nature, for which any man leſs than a King ſhould dye, and ſuch wherefore no Sacrifice will be accepted, *Pſal.* 51. 16.

This was the rigour of that *Political Law*, which God impoſed upon the *Jews* by *Moſes*; thoſe puniſhments that were threatned by it, which were *temporal* and of this World, were irreverſible, when once they were incurred.

But when *Chriſt* came into the World, his buſineſs was to give Laws of a much more gracious nature, which would admit of a Salvo for every ſin, and offer men a remedy, which if they did but uſe, although they had tranſgreſſed, they ſhould not ſuffer puniſhment.

This *gracious Covenant*, whoſe Promiſes and Rewards are *future*, and to be enjoy'd in the next World, was publiſhed more or leſs ever ſince *Adam*. For by the Grace of this, all the holy *Patriarchs* hoped for pardon; and by it likewiſe all the *Good men* among the *Jews*, when they ſhould be brought to Gods Tribunal in the next World, hoped to be forgiven. But the Promulgation of it under *Moſes* was *dark* and *obſcure*, and lay hid in great meaſure, and almoſt buried under the crowd of the *rigid*, and *inexorable Laws* of the *Moſaick Covenant*.

But when *Chriſt* came into the World, his Errand was to abrogate all the rigour of *Moſes*'s *Law*, and to Preach an *univerſal Pardon* upon *Repentance*. And of this he gave them a clear inſtance in the caſe of the *Woman*, who was taken in the very *act of Adultery*. *Moſes*, ſay they, and that very truly, * *commanded us* in his Law, *that ſuch ſhould be ſtoned; but what ſayeſt thou?* Joh. 8. 5. But his Sentence was, *Go and ſin no more,*

* Lev. 20. 10.

more, and then will not I condemn thee, v. 11; which was a fit ſentence for that Religion, *whereby they ſhould be juſtified from all thoſe things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes*, Act. 13.39.

Whatſoever it was therefore under the rigour of the *meer Law* of *Moſes*, under the *Religion* and *Law of Chriſt* our caſe is not become quite deſperate, and irrecoverable upon the firſt offence. It is not every *wilful ſin*, and much leſs our *ſlips of ignorance* and *inconſideration*, which can for ever exclude us from the Favour of God, and incapacitate us for his Mercy. No, the Religion of Chriſt is not a Religion that ſeeks advantages of us, and ſhuts us up cloſe Priſoners of Damnation, as ſoon as we are guilty of any thing which may deſerve it: For Chriſt need never have come into the World for that end, ſince the Law had rendred us accurſed, and miſerable enough already. But he came on a quite contrary Errand, to be the Miniſter of Life and Pardon, and not to ſeal us up to eternal Death upon the firſt wilful tranſgreſſion, but to procure for us remiſſion of all our deadly and damning ſins, and to reſtore us out of a ſtate of Enmity and Death, to a ſtate of Mercy and Reconciliation. He came to find out a remedy for all our evils, and to preſcribe us a way of recovering our ſelves, when we had fallen by any ſin; ſo that although none of us all have lived free from it, yet in the event ſin ſhall not be our ruine.

And that remedy which God has provided us for this purpoſe, is *Repentance*. He doth not abandon us upon the commiſſion of every ſin; but *he is heartily deſirous that we ſhould repent of it*, and when we do ſo, *he has obliged himſelf by his Truth and Faithfulneſs to forgive it*.

He is *heartily deſirous*, I ſay, *that whenſoever we commit any ſin we ſhould repent of it*. If we dare take his

own word, he tells us, *as he lives, that he doth not delight in the death of any ſinner, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live; turn you, turn you,* as he goes on, *from your evil ways; for why will you die, O houſe of Iſrael?* Ezek. 33. 11. And this all the World experience by him, in his *long-ſuffering* and *forbearance* with them. For he doth not exact the puniſhment ſo ſoon as we have incurred it; but expects long to ſee if we will return and repent, that then he may with honour pardon and remit it; this being, as St. *Paul* aſſures us, the end of his *forbearance* and *long ſuffering, to lead us to repentance,* Rom. 2. 4. And what St. *Paul* ſays, that we all *experience.* For during all that time wherein he bears with us, how *reſtleſs* and *unwearied, earneſt* and *affectionate* are his *endeavours* for this purpoſe? He *admoniſhes us of our faults by his Word,* and *by his Miniſters*; he *invites us to return by his Love,* and *by his Promiſes*; he *moves us to bethink our ſelves by his Spirit,* and *by his Providences*; and if we are *ſtubborn,* and not to be thus gently won by theſe *methods of mildneſs,* he ſeeks to reclaim us by a *bleſſed,* and a *moſt affectionate force* and *violence.* For he *corrects* us with his *Rod,* and viſits us in chaſtiſement, and never ceaſes to try all means of reducing us to a ſenſe of our ſin and repentance, till we are become *plainly incorrigible,* and *utterly rebellious,* and ſo fit for nothing, but to be *ſwallowed up of ruine.* And yet even then his deſire of reclaiming us is ſo *ſtrong,* and his love ſo *affectionate*; that he ſcarce knows how to give us *over. How ſhall I give thee up,* ſaith he, *O Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee, O Iſrael?* Hoſ 11 8.

And *when we do repent,* I ſay, *he has obliged himſelf by his Truth and Faithfulneſs moſt graciouſly to forgive us.*

This was the Doctrine of the *Prophets. Let the wicked*

wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, ſays Iſaiah, *for he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,* Iſai. 55. 7. *If the wicked man,* ſays God by *Ezekiel, will turn from all his ſins that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die.* All his *tranſgreſſions, which he hath* formerly *committed, ſhall not be mentioned unto him, but in his righteouſneſs, that he hath done* ſince *he ſhall live. For have I any pleaſure at all that the wicked ſhould die, ſaith the Lord God? and not that he ſhould turn from his ways, and live?* Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23.

This is the great Doctrine of the *Goſpel,* which is a *Covenant of remiſſion of ſins* upon *Repentance.* Repentance is its *great Article* and *fundamental Truth,* and is therefore called by St. *Paul* the *Foundatitn of Repentance,* Heb. 6. 1. For that which was taught to all the World, in all the *degrees* of Publication of the *Goſpel,* was, that *now God called all men to repent,* and *that he would forgive them all their ſins upon their true repentance.*

St. *John* the *Baptiſt,* who was Chriſts Herald and Fore-runner, at his entrance upon that work, begins with it. *John,* ſays St. *Luke, in all the Country about Jordan, came preaching the Baptiſm of repentance, for the remiſſion of ſins,* Luk. 3. 3.

Our Lord and Saviour *Chriſt* himſelf, when he comes after to proclaim his own Goſpel, goes on with it. *Jeſus began to preach,* ſays St. *Matthew, and to ſay, Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand,* Mat. 4. 17.

And when he left the World, the Commiſſion which he gives to his *Apoſtles,* is to proceed on ſtill in the Promulgation of it to all the *World,* as he had done to the people of the *Jews.* For at the laſt time of his being with them, juſt before his *Aſcenſion* into Heaven, when,

as

* Mat. 28. 19. as St. *Matthew* * tells us, he commissioned them to *preach to all mankind*; those *instructions* which he gave to them, St. *Luke* informs us were, that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all Nations in his Name, beginning at Jerusalem*, Luke 24. 47. This was the chief thing which they had in *Commission*, and the summ and substance of their *Embassy*. For that *Ministry* which was *committed to them*, was a Ministry of reconciling God and men by this means, as St. *Paul* says, or a *Ministry of Reconciliation*; so that *they were Ambassadours for Christ, as though God did beseech men by them*, and they as Christs Deputies, who is the prime Mediator, did *pray them in his stead to be reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

And when the *Apostles* came to *execute their Orders*, the publishing of this was all their *care* and *practice*. For they all of them went about preaching in *all places*, and to *all persons*, *repentance* for the *remission of sins*.

St. *Peter* in his first Sermon thus exhorts the people; *Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins*, Act. 2. 38: and so again *Act.* 3. *Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*, v. 19. And the same he proclaims more *generally* in his second Epistle, assuring all Christians, that the *Lord is not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, which is sure to prevent it, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9.

St. *Paul* preaches to the *Athenians*, that *now God had commanded all men every where to repent*, Act. 17. 30.

And St. *John* assures us, that by vertue of that Gospel-Covenant which was confirmed with us in Christs Blood, *if* with repenting hearts *we confess our sins, he is faithful* to his word, *and just* to his promise *to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from* the guilt and stain of *all unrighteousness* of one sort or other, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9.

I should recite almost the whole *New Testament*, if I were

were to repeat all that the *Scriptures* affirm in this point. But by what I have already offered, I take it to be clear beyond all doubt and ſcruple, that the *Goſpel Covenant* is a * *Covenant of remiſſion of ſins upon repentance.* God *moſt earneſtly deſires that we ſhould repent*, and *he is moſt truly and faithfully willing to forgive us all our former ſins upon our true repentance.* Nay I might add, he is not only *willing*, but extremely *joyful* and *glad of the occaſion.* For it is his higheſt pleaſure to go out, and meet a *returning Soul*; and the joy of his heart to embrace a *reclaimed Penitent*, as our Saviour has moſt clearly intimated to us, in the moſt *welcome reception* of the *returning Prodigal*, Luke 15. 11, 12, &c. *There is* a general *joy* in the Heavenly Court, ſays our Saviour again, and *in the preſence of all the Angels of God*, even *over* any *one ſinner that repenteth*, Luk. 15. 10: nay *there is more joy over one penitent, than* there is *over ninety and nine juſt perſons, which need no repentance*, v. 7.

Thus has God provided us of a *means*, *which will moſt certainly reſtore us to his Favour.* He has not left us in our forlorn ſtate, but has preſcribed us this method of repentance to recover us out of it, and to be the great Inſtrument of our Pardon and Reconciliation.

And this remedy is *adequate* to all our needs, and able to regain all that, which our ſins at any time have made us loſe. For it will repair the breach upon all ſorts of offences, whether they be our *known* or *unknown*, our *voluntary* or *involuntary* ſins. Of all which I ſhall now proceed to ſpeak particularly.

This remedy of repentance, I ſay, God has fitted for all ſorts of tranſgreſſions; whether they be,

1. Our *known*, or
2. Our *unknown* and *ſecret ſins.*
3. Our *unknown* and *ſecret* ſins have the benefit of this.

* This is that Grace which Chriſts bloud procured for us αἷμα αὐτοῦ ὃ,τι διὰ τὴν μεληθεῖσαν σωτηρίαν ἐκηχυθὲν, παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὑπήνεγκεν. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 7. And that which enſued upon his exaltation —— *exalted to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins*, Acts 5. 31. And Gods granting the *Gentiles* leave to become Chriſtians, which he ſignified by giving them the Holy Ghoſt as well as others, is called his *granting them Repentance unto Life*, Acts 11. 18.

this remedy, and that whereupon God will pardon them is a *general repentance*, and a *general prayer for forgiveneſs*.

As for ſeveral both of our *voluntary* and *involuntary* ſins, they are *ſecret* and *concealed* from us, and quite without our *knowledge* and *remembrance*. We are wholly ignorant and in the dark about them, and our Conſciences have no more ſenſe of them, than they have of thoſe which we were never guilty of. For as for our *involuntary ſins*, in *ſome* of them we are wholly *ignorant*, and never think them ſinful; and in *others* we are *inconſiderate*, and do not many times obſerve that we ſin in them. And as for our *voluntary* and *wilful* ſins, though we know full well, and obſerve when we at firſt commit them; yet doth our knowledge of them, as of other things, ſlip out of our minds by degrees, and through length of time, and throng of other thoughts, at laſt we quite *forget* them.

And theſe ſins being thus *quite out of our thoughts*, and wholly *ſecret* and *unknown* to us; we cannot *particularly* either *beg pardon for them*, or *repent of them*.

We cannot, I ſay, *particularly beg pardon for them*. For no man can become a ſuiter in behalf of he knows not whom, nor recommend any thing to Gods mercy before he has diſcovered it himſelf. And ſince theſe particular ſins are ſecret and unknown, they cannot be the matter of a particular prayer and recommendation.

Nor can we *particularly repent* of them. As for our *wilful* ſins indeed, whether we *remember* them or have *forgot* them, the caſe is the ſame as to *one prime part* of a *particular repentance*, viz. *our forſaking of them*, and *beginning to obey that particular known Law which we had wilfully ſinned againſt*. We muſt retract *every* voluntary ſin by a voluntary obedience, and without this we can-

can have no just hopes of pardon. For there is no hopes of salvation to any man, but upon a *particular obedience to all known Laws*; so that when once he sees and understands a Duty, he must obey it particularly before he can expect to live by it. But now as for *those Laws* which are transgressed by our *wilful* sins, they are all *known*, since we could not will and chuse to disobey them, unless we saw and knew our selves to be bound by them. So that whether we had sinned against them formerly, or no; whether we remember it, or have forgot it; obedience to them is our present Duty, and a Duty too so necessary, that without it we cannot be saved. If therefore we have sinned against any such known Law, we must amend it, and leave off wilfully to repeat it; for our obedience to all them is necessary to our pardon, and whether we remember or have forgot that we transgressed *formerly*, as to the present it is all one, for we must chuse to obey now.

As for our *wilful* sins then, which being long since acted, are now quite *forgotten* and *unknown*, one great act of a particular repentance is necessary to their pardon, *viz. conversion, or new obedience* and *reformation*. For all *wilful* sins are transgressions of *known* Laws, and whether a man has broken or kept it *formerly*, a *present* obedience in all chosen actions to every such particular Law, is necessary to put him into a *state of mercy* and *salvation*.

But as for other acts of a particular repentance, *viz. confession, sorrow, detestation*, and the like; there is no place for them about any of our *Secret*, whether they be *voluntary*, or *involuntary*, sins. For no man can *confess he knows not what*, nor *grieve he understands not why*, nor *hate* and *detest he knows not whom*; so that he must particularly know his sins, before he can be thus particular in his repentance of them.

A *particular prayer* and *repentance* then have no place about our *unknown* ſins; they are not capable to be exerciſed about them, and therefore they cannot be exacted for the pardon of them.

But that *prayer* and *repentance* whereof they are *capable*, and whereupon God will graciouſly *forgive* them, is *indefinite* and *general*. Theſe may very well be uſed about them. For we may all underſtand thus much by our ſelves, that we are all Sinners, and are guilty of much more than we know and can remember. Several ſins ſlipt from us at firſt without our knowledge and obſervation; and ſeveral others, which were at firſt obſerved, were afterwards forgotten. And when we know this general number, although we are not able to recover any particular inſtance, we may very well be ſorry for it, and beg God to forgive it; and ſo expiate them as much as may be, by a *general prayer* and *repentance*.

And this remedy God has aſſigned for our *unknown ſins*, and when we make uſe of it he will forgive them. Holy *David* was very ſenſible that he laboured under many ſuch *ſecret faults*, and by this means, of a *general penitential prayer*, he endeavours to procure their *pardon*. *Who*, ſays he, *can underſtand his errours? Cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults*, Pſal. 19. 12. And becauſe ſuch ſins are daily ſlipping from us, that our remedy might be as near as our diſeaſe, our Lord has put into our daily prayers this general petition for our expiation, *Forgive us our treſpaſſes*, Matth. 6. 12.

As for this firſt ſort then, our *unknown* and *ſecret* ſins, a *general prayer* and *repentance* is their remedy. If we obey all known Laws, and particularly repent of all our known tranſgreſſions; our ſecret and unknown ſins need not lye heavy on us. For if we are honeſtly ignorant of them, and uſe due pains and ingenuity about them; if we neither overlook them through ſloth and negligence,

negligence, nor miſtake them through partiality and wilfulneſs; a general and penitential prayer ſhall ſerve their turn, and reſtore us unto mercy and reconciliation.

And then,

2. As for all our *known* ſins, God has not been wanting to us in them neither, but has moſt graciouſly provided us of a remedy, and means of reconciliation for them, of what *nature* or *degree* ſoever they be. Whether,

1. Our *voluntary* and *wilful*; or,

2. Our *involuntary* ſins.

1. In the Goſpel God has provided us of a remedy to reſtore us again to his favour, when once we have loſt it through our *voluntary*, and *wilful* ſins; and that remedy is a *particular repentance* of them.

To the pardon of theſe it is altogether neceſſary that we *particularly amend* and *forſake* them. For they interrupt a ſtate of love and good agreement, and ſet God and us at enmity and defiance. So long as they are continued in, they keep God and men at a diſtance, they interpoſe betwixt us and his mercy, and hinder all the ſigns of his approbation, and all the expreſſions of his pardoning Grace, from iſſuing out upon us. To reſtore us therefore to Gods Grace and acceptance, theſe voluntary ſins muſt be taken out of the way; and by a voluntary amendment and reformation, we muſt undo all that was done amiſs in our wilful tranſgreſſion. And of theſe ſins all thoſe places are meant, that make *repentance*, which, as we ſaw above, includes in it *amendment*, the indiſpenſable condition of life and pardon. As when *repentance and remiſſion* of ſins is commanded *to be preached to all Nations*, Luke 24. 47: and men are bid to *repent*, that *their ſins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19; or, as it is in the peremptory and ſevere words of

our Saviour, to *repent, or else they shall all perish*, Luke 13. 3.

And as this particular repentance and reformation is altogether *necessary* to the pardon of our wilful sins; so is it most certainly *available*, and *sufficient* for them. Although they are of a most heinous guilt, and provoking Nature; yet is not their offence unpardonable, or their case desperate. For after a man has put himself out of a state of Grace and God's favour by them, he is not quite cast off, nor need to despair of getting in again. He is not presently, upon every such offence, banished this Kings Court and Presence for ever; but upon his particular repentance and reformation, he will be allowed to recover his former station. For the preaching of the *Prophets*, of the *Baptist*, of *Christ*, and of his *Apostles*, was to call all the *wilful* and *lost sinners*, both of the *Jewish* and *Gentile* World, to this reconciliation; Christ, as himself inform us, *coming to* * *save that which was lost*, and to † *call all Sinners* of one sort or another, *to repentance*. Mens very *Baptism* or entrance into Christianity, is a cleansing of them from the guilt of *all former sins without exception*. *Repent, and be baptized every one*, says St. *Peter, for the remission of sins*, Act. 2. 38; and *be baptized*, says *Ananias* unto *Saul, and wash away* all *thy sins*, Act. 22. 16.

* Mat. 18. 11.
† Mat. 9. 13.

Nay after men are once *baptized*, and have all their former wilful sins washt off in that *water of regeneration*; yet is *not every wilful sin, which they are guilty of, thenceforward irrecoverably damnable*, but *they are still called to accept of mercy and forgiveness upon repentance*, as before. When men come under the Covenant of Grace, and list themselves under the Discipline of *Christ*; they do not subject themselves to a *Covenant of Terror* and *Desperation*, which takes hold of the first offence, and denounces an irrevocable enmity ever after.

after. No, a *baptized offender* is under the Grace of repentance, as well as others. For that repentance whereto we are called by Chriſts Goſpel, is not ſo much an *act* as a *ſtate*: which St. *Paul* intimates, when he talks of *renewing men unto repentance*, that is, unto the condition and ſtanding terms of it, *Heb.* 6. 4, 6. It is of Gods Grace that there is *any* forgiveneſs, and, in order thereunto, *any* place for repentance at all; and of the ſame Grace we have received a promiſe of forgiveneſs upon repentance for *all ſins*, and at *all times* whatſoever. *If any man* among us baptized Chriſtians *ſin*, ſays St. *John*, his caſe is in no wiſe deſperate, for *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins*, as well as *for the ſins of the whole* unchriſtned *world*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. The Goſpel doth not bid every *wilful offending Chriſtian* to deſpair, and conclude himſelf to be irrevocably loſt, and fallen beyond remedy into a damned condition. But its deſign is quite another thing, to recover them again from that ſtate of death, and to call them by repentance to mercy and forgiveneſs. For the Spirit of God himſelf writes to the * *back-ſliding Church of Epheſus, to remember from whence they were fallen, and to repent and do their firſt works*, Rev. 2. 5. And St. *Paul* finds fault with the *Chriſtians* at *Corinth* for *not repenting of their uncleanneſs, and fornication, and laſciviouſneſs which they had* wilfully *committed*; threatning *to bewail them*, or to excommunicate them in ſorrow and lamentation, according to the cuſtom of thoſe times, if they did it not, 2 *Cor.* 12. 21. Nay in the caſe of the *inceſtuous* Criminal, who had committed ſuch a fault as was not *ſo much as named*, and much leſs done *among the unbaptized Heathens* themſelves; he doth not conſign him up to *eternal Torments*, but endeavours, by the rod of Diſcipline and *Church-cenſures*, to reduce him to

* Rev. 2. 16. 21.

to *repentance*, *that his ſpirit might be ſaved in the* judgment *day of the Lord Jeſus*, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 5. And as for the other Members of the *Church of Corinth*, who were unconcerned, and *puffed up* at ſuch an enormous accident; he reproves them ſmartly, that by bringing them to a ſenſe of their ſin, he may work them into a reformation, v. 1, 2. Which good effect, when he underſtood that his reproof had wrought upon them, he rejoyces mightily, and glories in it in his next *Letter*. *I rejoice*, ſays he, that by *my former letter you were made ſorry*, ſeeing it was *after a godly manner*, and *you ſorrowed to repentance*: For ſuch *godly ſorrow worketh repentance unto ſalvation*, which is *not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 8, 9, 10. And as he practiſed thus with *baptized wilful offenders* himſelf, ſo doth he inſtruct *Timothy* that he ſhould do likewiſe. For he tells him, that the way whereby the man of God ought to deal with ſinners, even thoſe of the worſt ſort, who are not only *ſubject*, but *enſlaved* to it, is not peremptorily to damn, and ſeal them up faſt unto deſtruction: but in great meekneſs to endeavour to reclaim them, that by recovering them to *repentance*, he may reſtore them again to life and pardon. *The man of God*, ſays he, *muſt in meekneſs inſtruct* even the refractory and contumacious, or *thoſe that oppoſe themſelves* againſt him, *if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth, and that they may recover themſelves out of the ſnare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. And to name no more inſtances of this nature, but to ſumm up all in one, even thoſe great and *enormous wilful ſinners*, whoſe offences are ſo hainous, as to make them fit to be *expelled the ſociety of Chriſtians*; are not yet in their very *Excommunication* ſhut up irrecoverably under the pains of Hell, but, quite contrary, are endeavoured by this very means

means to be reduced to *repentance*, and thereby to *pardon* and *acceptance*; *Excommunication* it ſelf being, as St. *Paul* ſays, *for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. And the *Power of the Keys* in *remitting* or *retaining ſins*, that is, in the excommunicating or abſolving of offenders, is inſtructed with the Miniſters of Chriſts Church, *for* the *edification* of the excommunicated ſinners themſelves, *and not for* their *deſtruction*, 2 Cor. 10. 8. and chap. 13. 10.

And by all this we ſee that the *Grace of Chriſts Goſpel* is a *grace of repentance and remiſſion of ſins*, all the way, both *before Baptiſm*, and alſo *after* it. In all periods, from the beginning to the end, it is an inſtrument of pardon and a means of peace; or a *word* and *miniſtry*, as St. *Paul* ſays, *of reconciliation*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. If we break our *Baptiſmal vows*, which are the condition of the Covenant, *once*, and thereby forfeit all our Right to Happineſs; it gives us liberty to *repeat* them. For we have the freedom, both in our *private* and our *publick prayers*, to renew all our good reſolutions, and to make God new promiſes, and to undertake for the performance of that, wherein we have wilfully failed, by new engagements. Nay it doth not only allow that we *may* thus renew the Covenant; but it requires that we *ſhould*: it *has appointed an Ordinance*, the *Euchariſt* or *Lords Supper* I mean, *for this very purpoſe*. For the Bread and Wine which we eat and drink there, our Saviour tells us is a *Federal form*, the *New Covenant*, or, according to the manner of the *Eaſtern* Nations, who ratified their Covenants by eating and drinking together, the *re-entring* or *confirming of that Covenant*, *which was at firſt ſealed* and *confirmed in his Blood*. *This*, ſays he, *is the New Teſtament* or * Covenant *in my blood, drink ye all of it*, and ſo, according to the known

* διαθήκη.

known Right, confirm this Covenant with God by it, *Luk.* 22. 20. *Mat.* 22. 27. And this he has not only *allowed*, but *injoined* to all his Disciples ——— *Do this*, says he, *in remembrance of me.* And that not only at *one time*, as it is with Baptism, but at *all times* during your whole lives; for in this manner of a Federal *eating* and *drinking of this Bread and Wine, you must shew forth the Lords death always*, even *till he come* again the second time, *i. e.* unto the Worlds end, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25, 26.

Forgiveness of sins then *upon repentance* is a *Grace which is begun in Baptism, and ever after continued, being repeated in every Prayer, and sealed in every Sacrament, to the end of our lives.* So that no wilful sin can damn us, if we repent of it; but the damned accursed sinner, is only he who lives and dies *impenitent.* Insomuch as that very sin, for which St. *Paul* says there is no benefit from Christs Death, nor any help of Sacrifice under the Gospel; is therefore excluded from all *Grace of pardon*, because it is from all *possibility of repentance.* For therein it is that the *irrecoverableness* of those lost sinners consists — *It is impossible*, says he, *to renew them to repentance*, Heb. 6. 6.

Thus then, we see, that Christs Gospel has afforded us a remedy even for our wilful sins, whether they be committed *before Baptism*, or *after* it, at one time or at another, at all without exception; so that although sometimes we do fall under them, yet we shall not be eternally condemned for them. Let us but repent particularly therefore and amend it, and whatever sin we have wilfully been guilty of, our work is done. For our repentance shall set us straight, and our reformation will make us innocent; and if we are careful to do so no more, our offence will be looked upon as if it never had been done at all.

But

But againſt this *pardonableneſs of our wilful ſins after our belief of the Goſpel*, and *Baptiſm into the Chriſtian Faith*, ſome perhaps may be ready to object *two places* from St. *Pauls* Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, wherein he may ſeem to teach us a more *rigorous*, and *ſevere Leſſon*.

In the 10*th Chapter*, he lays down this as a great Truth: *If we ſin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge*, or open belief and * acknowledgement *of the truth*, of Chriſts Goſpel, *there remains no more* benefit to us from Chriſts *ſacrifice for ſins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which ſhall conſume the adverſaries*, v. 26,27. * ἐπίγνωσιν.

And in the 6*th Chapter*, to the eternal Terror of all *wilful Back-ſliders*, he ſpeaks thus to the ſame purpoſe: *It is impoſſible for thoſe who were once enlightned, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God; if after all this they ſhall fall away*, to be again recovered, or for any of us *to renew them to repentance; ſeeing they crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame*, v. 4,5,6.

But now if our *wilful ſins after Baptiſm*, and belief of the Goſpel, be thus *deſperate*, and utterly excluded from all hopes of cure, and benefit of Expiation by Chriſts Sacrifice, as the Apoſtle in theſe places ſeems to intimate: how can the Goſpel be truly called a *Miniſtration of Reconciliation*, *Grace*, and *Pardon*, towards all ſorts of *wilful ſins*?

To take off all this difficulty I will anſwer to the places ſeverally, that all thoſe good minds, which are wont to be perplexed by them, may be more perfectly relieved by a *particular*, and *diſtinct* underſtanding of them.

Firſt then, to begin with that, the words of St. *Paul* in the 10*th Chapter* of his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* are

Verſe 23. theſe. *Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without*
25. *wavering; Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is, but exhorting one another* to the open owning and frequenting of them; *and* this we ought to do *ſo much the more*, foraſmuch
26. *as ye ſee the day* of Gods righteous Judgment *approaching. For if we ſin wilfully* in this backſliding from the publick Aſſemblies, and from the profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, *after that we have* once *received the*
* ἐπίγνωσιν. *knowledge*, or profeſſed belief and * acknowledgement *of the truth* of it; *there remains no more* benefit to us
27. from Chriſts *ſacrifice for ſins; but a certain fearful looking for of* that *judgment*, I ſay, *which ſhall devour the adverſaries*. And this all you *Hebrews* have reaſon to expect from *Chriſt*, from what you very well know of the manner of proceeding in ſuch caſes under *Moſes*.
28. For *he that deſpiſed* or rejected the whole, yea or even any one particular inſtance of *Moſes's Law*, whereto death was threatned, *dyed without mercy*, if the thing was proved againſt him, *under* the teſtimony of *two or*
29. *three witneſſes*. And then *of how much ſorer puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall* this wilful ſinner *be thought worthy, who hath*, by ſuch wilful rejecting of all Chriſts Laws and Religion, *trodden under foot the Son of God*, as if he were not raiſed up again from the dead, but were yet in his grave; *and hath accounted* that *blood* of his, which confirmed the New *Covenant*, and *wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing*, making it to have been juſtly ſhed, as the blood of a Malefactour; *and hath done deſpight unto the Spirit of Grace* and all its evidence, by rejecting it as inſufficient? I have ſet down the place at large, that the very *Text* it ſelf may afford us an accumulated proof of the enſuing Explication.

But now as for this ſin, which, being wilfully committed after the belief and acknowledgment of Chriſts Goſpel,

Goſpel, is here ſaid to have no help from Chriſts Sacrifice, nor any benefit of his Propitiation: it is *not the ſinful tranſgreſſion of every Law of Chriſt, no nor of any one*; but a *total Apoſtaſie and abrenunciation of them all.*

The ſin, I ſay, which, being *wilfully committed* after the belief of Chriſts Goſpel, is here ſaid to exclude us from all benefit of Chriſts Sacrifice, is *not the tranſgreſſion of any of Chriſts Laws whatſoever, nay, nor of any one.* For the *Corinthians* were guilty of the *wilful* tranſgreſſion of ſeveral Laws, and that too after they had embraced the *Faith of Chriſt.* They were guilty of an indulged *Laſciviouſneſs, Uncleanneſs*, and *Fornication*, 2 Cor. 12.21. Nay one of them was guilty of it in ſuch an inſtance, as was *not ſo much as named*, and much leſs practiſed *among the Gentiles* themſelves; *viz.* in a moſt inceſtuous marrying of his Step mother, or *his Fathers wife*, 1 Cor. 5 1. And St. *Peter*, a great Apoſtle, after three years converſe with his Lord and Maſter, *denies him three times*, and that not ſuddenly e're he could bethink himſelf, but after a due ſpace of time between one denial and another, *Luk.* 22. 57, 58, 59. All which he did in the moſt *aggravated* manner, by accumulating *perjuries*, and *prophaneneſs* upon the ſin of diſowning his Maſter; for when his *bare word* would not be believed, *he began to curſe, and to ſwear that he knew him not*, Mar. 14. 71. All theſe were ſins *wilful* in their commiſſion, and ſome of them moſt *highly criminal* in their nature; but yet none of them was excluded from the benefit of Chriſts Sacrifice, for they all enjoyed it. So that it is not any one tranſgreſſion of a particular Law after men have embraced the Faith of Chriſt, which is the un-atoned ſin here mentioned.

But it is *an utter rejecting of all the Laws of Chriſt, and a total Apoſtaſie from his whole Religion.* It is the

renouncing of Christs Authority, the *disowning of his Gospel*, and *falling quite off from him to Judaism*, or *Paganism* or *something directly Antichristian*, which is the sin here intended. And whosoever doth this *wilfully*, *after he has* once *acknowledged it*, and been convinced by it, (as most men, if not every man, must do who is guilty of it at all) for him *there remains no more sacrifice for sin*, *but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*, *which shall devour him*, and all other Anrichristian *adversaries*.

* ἁμαρτια ὀντων ἡμῶν.

That the word which is here translated * *sin*, signifies sometimes, not all sin in *general*, but particularly this *superlative* height and *aggregation* of all sin, an *utter revolt from Gods service*, and *Apostasie from his whole Religion*, appears plainly from 2 *Pet.* 2; where the *Apostate Angels* are called *the Angels that* † *sinned*, v. 4.

† ἀγγελοι ἁμαρτησαντες.

And that this *particular* way of sinning, by an *universal Apostasie*, and *falling quite off from the profession of the Christian Faith*, is that very sin which is here intended, will appear from all those things which are spoken of it in this place.

'Tis plain from the *Apostles exhortation against it*—*Let us hold fast*, says he, *the profession of our faith*, and not revolt from it, v. 23.

From his *further dissuasion from it* in the *verse* next but one---*not forsaking the* Christian *Assemblies*, which is a great step towards the disowning of Christ himself, *as the manner of some is*, v. 25.

From his *Character of it* in the *verses* that follow, it being a sin that includes in it *all* these instances of aggravation.

By it we *become utterly Antichristian*, and *Adversaries to Christ and his Religion*; ---*the fiery indignation* that is kindled by this sin, *shall devour* all them, who, by reason of it, are become *Adversaries*, v. 27.

By

By it we *deny Christ to be risen*, and *look upon the Son of God as yet in the Grave* and *under our feet*; we *count his blood*, which was spilt for the confirmation of the New Covenant, *to have been the impure* and *unholy blood of a Malefactor justly executed*; we *despise all the clear proof* and *convictive evidence of the Spirit of Grace*, which we once thought a sufficient Argument for his Religion, and whereby we were moved to the acknowledgment of that truth of his, which now we contumeliously reject. Whosoever hath committed this sin, saith the *Apostle*, I will show him what he hath done; *he hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace*, ver. 29.

As for the sin then which is here spoken of, it is plainly this; *viz. a sin that is contrary to the holding fast of our Christian profession*, that *implies a forsaking of the Christian Assemblies*, that *makes us open enemies and adversaries to Christ and his cause*, seeing thereby we *deny Christ to be risen*, and *affirm him to have been an Impostor*, and *his blood to have been*, like that of the Thieves which were crucified with him, *unholy and impure as the blood of a Malefactor*, and *set at nought all the miraculous proofs*, and *despise all the convictive evidence of the Holy Ghost* that *Spirit of Grace*, which hath proved to us abundantly that that Religion of his, which we now renounce, is a most certain truth of God. All *these marks* are evidently attributed to that sin, which the Apostle here speaks of; and then what can any man think it to be less, than an *absolute Apostasie from the whole Religion*, and an *utter abrenuntiation of all the Laws of Christ*?

Now whosoever *wilfully* falls under this, I confess he is in a very deplorable, and most desperate case. Because

cauſe for him, as ſaith the Apoſtle, *there remains no more benefit* from Chriſts Propitiation or *Sacrifice for ſin*: He has affronted that ſo enormouſly, that God will never ſuffer him to be the better by it. And this to a *Jew* ought to be no *uncouth* or *ſurprizing Doctrine*, ſeeing he who thus renounced *Moſes*, could have no Sacrifice to atone for him. For no propitiation was allowed for him who *wilfully rejected any one particular Command of Moſes*, but leaſt of all if he had *apoſtatized from the whole Law*. *He that deſpiſed* even any one particular threatning death in *Moſes's Law, died without mercy under two or three Witneſſes*. But now this *Covenant* and *Law of Moſes*, was ſealed only in the *blood of Bulls and Goats*; whereas this *Covenant* and *Law of Chriſt*, which theſe men renounce that I am ſpeaking of, was confirmed in his *own blood*: *Moſes*, the Authour of that Law, was but a *Servant*; whereas *Chriſt*, the Authour of this, was a *Son*. If then the revolting from *Moſes* was ſo unpardonable, that it inevitably incurred death, and put a man out of all hopes of propitiation and benefit of Sacrifice; *of how much ſorer puniſhment*, as he moſt rationally argues, muſt all Apoſtates from Chriſt *be accounted worthy*, who by their falling away from his Religion, *tread under foot the Son of God himſelf*, a Perſon infinitely above *Moſes*; *and count the blood*, not of Bulls and Goats, but of the Chriſt of God, wherewith this *Covenant* was ſealed, to be *an unholy thing*? They are indeed irrevocably plunged in death, and their apoſtatizing or *drawing back* from that Religion, which upon ſo good evidence they had before acknowledged, is to their own ruine and *deſtruction*, ver. 38.

But although this *total apoſtaſie* and *abrenuntiation of Chriſtianity* it ſelf, when 'tis *wilfully committed*, be thus remedileſs and deſperate a ſin; yet is that nothing to the breach of *any partitular Law* or to the *wilful tranſ-*

greſſions

greſſions of any baptized man, ſo long as he ſtill continues Chriſtian. For all his ſins, of one ſort or other, have the ſalvo of repentance provided for them: and if he doth but once *reform* and *amend* them, he ſhall not be condemned for them.

And thus having ſhewed, that this place in the tenth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, makes nothing againſt the pardonableneſs of any *Chriſtian* mans ſin upon repentance, but only againſt the forgiveneſs of thoſe who have *apoſtatized from Chriſt*, and become *unchriſtian*; I proceed now,

2. To conſider that other place in the ſixth Chapter of the ſame *Epiſtle*, where the *Apoſtles* words are theſe: *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt*, Verſe 1. wherein we are wont to catechize even Children and Novices; *let us go on unto perfection*, and to treat of ſuch things as are fit for grown men: *not laying again*, for ſuch as are apoſtatized from it, *the* firſt *Foundations* of the Chriſtian Doctrine, as are the Doctrine *of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God*; *of* 2. *the Doctrine of Baptiſms, and of laying on of hands, and of reſurrection of the dead, and of eternal Judgment. And this will we do if God permit*, without returning, 3. as I ſay, to prove again the foundations of the Faith to them who are fallen from it; which indeed were a very vain, and fruitleſs undertaking. *For it is impoſſible for thoſe who were once enlightned* or * baptized, 4. * φωτισθέντας. *and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*; *and have taſted of the good word of* 5. God, *and of the powers of* Chriſts Kingdom, or *the World to come*; *if* after all this *they ſhall* wilfully *fall away* from this Faith, it is impoſſible for them, I ſay, to 6. be recovered, or for us, by any endeavours of ours, *to renew them again unto* the Grace and Covenant of *repentance*; becauſe God is irreconcileably provoked by this

this revolt, *ſeeing* thereby *they crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him* once again *to an open ſhame.*

Here indeed the Caſe is as deſperate as it was before; and 'tis no wonder why it ſhould, becauſe the ſin is the very *ſame.* For it is nothing leſs than an *univerſal backſliding*, an *apoſtaſie both in faith and manners*, a *renouncing of all the Religion* and *Laws of Chriſt*, whereof all theſe ſevere things are ſpoken.

† παραπεσόντας. As for the word † which is here put to note this *falling away*, it ſignifies for the moſt part a *fall which admits of a riſe again*, and is recoverable; but ſometimes it denotes a *fall that is deſperate*, and *beyond all hopes of remedy.* Thus the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of the *incredulous Jews*, to whom the Religion of Chriſt was a *ſtumbling block* and a *rock of offence*, diſtinguiſhes betwixt theſe two, * *ſtumbling*, and *falling*, making the *latter* to be much more dangerous than the *former*, and denying *it*, when he affirms the *other. Have they ſtumbled*, ſays he, *that they ſhould* † *fall* mortally and irrecoverably? *God forbid*, Rom. 11. 11.

* πλαι σι and πιπωσι.

† ἵνα πέσωσι.

And thus it ſignifies in *this* place. For the *falling away* here ſpoken of is nothing leſs than a *revolting from all Chriſt's Laws and Doctrines*, and an *apoſtatizing from his whole Religion.* Which appears from ſeveral things that are here ſaid of it, ſome whereof *they are ſaid to fall from*, and others *are ſaid to be implied in their falling.*

It appears, I ſay, from ſome things, *which they are ſaid to apoſtatize or fall from.*

They fall away *from their Baptiſm*, which is expreſſed by the word † *enlightned*, the common name in the *ancient Church* to ſignifie the baptized; from *the remiſſion of ſins*, the *preaching of the Word*, and the *adminiſtration of the Sacraments*, which are ſuch *priviledges* and

† φωτισθέντας. See Heb. 10. 32.

gifts

gifts of God, as are afforded to perſons baptized; from the *hopes of Heaven*, and all *the promiſes* and *good word of God*: from the *gift of tongues*, and *other effects of the Holy Ghoſt*, whereof, upon the *impoſition of the Apoſtles hands*, they had been made *Partakers*; and from the *power of working miracles*, that were ſo conſpicuous under the appearance of Chriſt, thoſe times of *Meſſiah*, which the *Jews* were wont to call the *Age* or *world to come*. *If thoſe*, ſays the Apoſtle, *who were once* baptized or *enlightned, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghoſt, and have taſted of the good word* or promiſe *of God, and the powers of the world to come*; *if they ſhall fall away*, or apoſtatize from all theſe, *it is impoſſible to renew them*, v. 4, 5, 6. This, as is evident, is the *Apoſtaſie* which is here ſpecified, which is nothing leſs than a *renouncing of the Baptiſmal Covenant*, of *the preaching of the Word*, of *the adminiſtration of the Sacraments*, of *all the Goſpel-promiſes*, nay of *all thoſe miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghoſt, whereof in the firſt times they were ordinarily made partakers*; and what can any man take this to be, but an *utter renouncing of the whole Goſpel*, and *Religion of Chriſt*?

And that it is ſo, is ſtill further manifeſt from *thoſe things, which are ſaid to be implied in their falling*.

For hereby they are ſaid to *condemn Chriſt as an Impoſtor*; to *juſtifie his murderers*; to *ſay he was crucified juſtly*, and *that were he now alive, they ſhould be ready to crucifie him over again*, which is a *publiſhing again to all the world his reproach*, and a *putting him anew to an open ſhame*. By *this falling away*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *they crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame*, v. 6.

But now thus to *renounce our Baptiſm*, and *all our Chriſtian Priviledges*, to *condemn Chriſt as a cheat and*

Impoſtor, to *juſtifie his Murderers*, and to *defame his Religion*; what is it leſs than a *renouncing of his Goſpel*, and a *falling off to perſecute the Chriſtian Faith and Profeſſion?*

And as for this indeed, the Apoſtle ſays expreſly that it is deſperate, and that *it is impoſſible for him*, by any endeavours or arguings which he can uſe, *to renew again* thoſe who are guilty of it, to that Goſpel-Covenant which they thus abjure, and which is the only gracious means of repentance and reconciliation. And ſince it is to no purpoſe, ſays he, I will not attempt it, but *go on* in ſpeaking to thoſe who ſtill retain the Faith, without concerning my ſelf to *prove again the foundation* to thoſe, who have apoſtatized from it, v. 1, 3.

Theſe wilful Apoſtates therefore are in a moſt deplorable caſe, for they have ſinned themſelves out of all capacity of mercy, and tranſgreſſed beyond all recovery. For there is no pardon to any wilful ſinner whatſoever without he repent; but as for Apoſtates, *it is impoſſible for any man to renew them again unto repentance.*

Their *renewal I ſay is impoſſible.* For as for all humane means which any men, even the *Apoſtles* of our Lord themſelves, could uſe for their recovery; they have defeated the n already. They know all the *evidence of Miracles*, and the *demonſtrations of the Spirit*; nay they have not only *ſeen* them, but they themſelves have been *partakers of them*, and *impower'd to work them:* but yet after all, they have renounced that belief which all theſe perſwade to, they are Armour of proof againſt all theſe demonſtrations of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and *Infidels to Chriſt* notwithſtanding them. So that let an Apoſtle himſelf urge any thing to them in behalf of Chriſts Religion, his Argument has been overcome before he offers

fers it. He tells them nothing new, nor ſhews them any thing but what they have ſeen, nay what they themſelves were formerly impower'd to ſhew to others; but all that was not ſtrong enough to keep them in the Faith, for when they ſaw it all, they turned *Infidels* and *Apoſtates* ſtill.

As for any *human means* then, they are of no force with them, they cannot reclaim them, or bring them anew to the acknowledgement of the Goſpel, which is the only gracious Miniſtry of Repentance and Reconciliation. So that if ever they be reſtored again, it muſt be by a *Divine Power*; for nothing now can poſſibly prevail with them, but a *ſpecial Providence*, and a *ſpecial Grace*.

But now here is the *deſperateneſs of their ſtate, theſe will never be afforded them.* For when men have wilfully ſinned up to this height, and fallen off againſt ſo great means, and ſo clear conviction; God, in the ordinary methods of his Grace, is reſolved to concern himſelf no further with them, nor to trouble himſelf any more for their recovery. They have had all the care and cultivation of his Grace which they are like to have, and now, like *barren ground*, (which after all that has been laid out upon it, brings forth nothing but *thorns* and *bryers*, that are not only *uſeleſs*, but *prickling* and *offenſive*) they are *nigh unto curſing*. And this is the very inſtance which the *Apoſtle* himſelf uſes, and the reaſon which he gives of that *impoſſibility*, which he had affirmed to be in that undertaking. *It is impoſſible*, ſays he, for any man *to renew them*, becauſe God will no longer help on his endeavours with his Grace, nor look any further after them. For with thoſe men who are Infidels after all his care, he will deal juſt as he doth with ground, whoſe fruit is [illegible] and offenſive after all his labour; and as for [illegible] evil ing with that, 'tis plainly this. *That ear[illegible]* [illegible]us dealſo indeed *which drink-*

drinketh up the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it was dreſſed; receiveth more bleſſing ſtill *from God. But that which*, after it has been thus water'd, *bears thorns and bryars, is rejected, and nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is*, not to be water'd any more, but *burnt up*, v. 7, 8.

As for theſe *two* places of the Apoſtle therefore in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, we ſee indeed that they ſpeak of *wilful ſins beyond pardon*, and of tranſgreſſions which are irremiſſible; but theſe ſins are not the wilful tranſgreſſions of any *Chriſtian man*, but a *wilful Apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity it ſelf*. So that after all it is true ſtill, that every man, who owns the Religion and profeſſes the Faith of Chriſt, is provided of a remedy for all his wilful ſins, whenſoever they are committed; for let him but particularly repent of them and amend them, and he never ſhall be condemned for them.

Nay ſo faſt is the tye, and ſo inſeparable is the connexion under the Goſpel of Chriſt, betwixt *Repentance* and *Remiſſion*; that, as I obſerved, this irremiſſible ſin of *wilful Apoſtaſie* it ſelf, is therefore alone declared *impoſſible to be forgiven*, becauſe it is *impoſſible to bring men to repent of it*, Heb. 6. 6.

If a man doth but *repent* then, let his ſin be *wilfully committed*, whether *before* or *after Baptiſm*, it matters not; for his repentance ſhall ſet him ſtraight in both, and his offence ſhall be quite forgotten, as if it had never been.

Indeed if a man goes on in a *conſtant trade of ſin, ſilencing continually his own conſcience*, and *grieving Gods holy Spirit*, and *deſpiſing all the means and offers of his Grace*; he may ſin himſelf *beyond his time of mercy*, and ſo his ſins will prove irremiſſible, becauſe he is gone too far ever to repent of them, which is their only remedy and means of pardon. For there is a *ſet period of Grace*,

Grace, and a certain ſeaſon and ſpace of time, wherein God will ſtill make the offers of his help, and of the guidance of his Spirit, to reclaim and reform men. But if after all, they ſlight all his offers, and reject his aid, and prove utterly incorrigible; he grows weary at laſt, and will trouble himſelf no more about them, but leave them wholly to themſelves. And this God plainly intimates concerning incorrigible *Ephraim*, who was juſt then about to be abandoned, and to be given up to the unmaſterable wickedneſs of his own heart——*How ſhall I give thee up*, ſays he, *O Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee, O Iſrael?* Hoſ. 11. 8. And our Saviour ſays the ſame over *intractable Jeruſalem*. *O! if thou hadſt but known, at leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace* with God; *but now* it is too late, for *they are hid from thine eyes*, Luk. 19. 42.

This, I confeſs, is a *ſtate of ſin* which is *deſperate* and *irrecoverable*; not for that repentance is no ſure means of remiſſion; but becauſe, when once men are come thus far, God deſerts them, ſo that they never can repent of them.

But as for *the time when any man is come up to this unpardonable pitch, that only God in Heaven knows*. No man can ſay, I am beyond my time of repentance, becauſe, without a *ſpecial Revelation*, no man can underſtand it. And therefore let a man have ſinned never ſo long, yet cannot that diſcourage him from repenting, becauſe if he ſet himſelf ſeriouſly about it, for ought he knows, God will pity him, and afford him his Grace and Spirit, which is never wanting to ſuch as heartily deſire it, to aid and ſtrengthen him in his repentance. Nay indeed, if a man be come ſo far as to bethink himſelf, and to be apprehenſive of his danger, and to be convinced of the deſtructiveneſs of his ſinful courſes; there is no queſtion to be made but that he will

will. For the tide is turned, and the change is begun already; and that it is a thing which needed God's Grace, as much as any thing that is yet remaining. For a *carriere in wickedneſs*, is like *running down hill*; the great difficulty is to make the *firſt ſtop*, but when once that is done, to return again is much more eaſie. And therefore if a man has received ſo much Grace, as makes him break off his evil courſes for the preſent, and ſtand and deliberate with himſelf, whether or no he ſhall proceed in it; he need not doubt, if he will go on to endeavour as he has begun, but that he ſhall have more, till at laſt he is fully enabled to perfect and compleat it. He has an experimental evidence that his time of Grace is not paſt, he may be ſure it is ſtill with him, becauſe it helps and works in him. For it is Grace that brings him on to what he is, and if he be but as willing to be aided by it, as it is ready to aſſiſt him, it will not fail to carry him on further. Gods Grace will ſtill grow upon him, as his own endeavours do; ſo that if he make good uſe of this, he ſhall have more. For this is laid down by our Lord, as a certain Rule of Divine diſpenſations; *To him that hath*, that is, maketh a right uſe of that Grace which he hath, *ſhall* more *be given* even in *abundance*, Mat. 25.29.

Whatſoever irreconcileableneſs therefore there may be, and truly is in ſome ſtates of ſin, when men have gone on beyond their time of Grace; yet he who has ſo much Grace as to doubt and queſtion, to fear and ſcruple, has great reaſon to think, that, as for his part, he is not paſt Grace, but under it. For an *irrecoverable* ſinner, is commonly one that is *hardned*; he tranſgreſſes without ſenſe, and goes on without fear; he is infatuated with his luſts, and lull'd aſleep in his ſin, and ſcarce ever comes to himſelf, till he awakes in Damnation. But if once he begins, eſpecially in the time of *health*,

health, either through a *ſevere reproof*, or a *ſevere providence*, to *interrupt his ſin for the preſent*, and to *apprehend the evil of it*; and if from thence he goes on to *good deſires*, and *holy purpoſes of well-doing*: then he feels that Grace which he is afraid he wants, and that good Spirit works in him, which he ſuſpects to have deſerted him. He is not in this irrecoverable ſtate, but is going on towards a good recovery.

Indeed if his *Conſcience is awakned in the height of horror*, and *extremity of deſpair*, ſo that he is *obſtinate againſt all good advice*, and *dead to all endeavour*, and *continues to be ſo*; this is not an effect of *Grace*, and a *ſtep towards repentance*; but a *terror of Judgment*, and a *fore-taſte of Hell*. If it deads all *induſtry*, by excluding all *hope*; if he *complain of his eſtate*, without *ſeeking to get out of it*, and *deſpair without all amendment*; this *fear of heart* and *terror of ſoul*, 'tis true, doth not bring him nearer unto life and pardon, but, by ſecuring him faſter in his ſin, it ſhuts him up a cloſer Priſoner of Condemnation.

But if he be ſo *apprehenſive of his danger*, as to *run from it*; if he has ſo much *hope*, as will put him upon *trying all means*, and *uſing his beſt endeavours*; if upon his apprehenſions of his preſent evil ſtate, he fears, and deſires, and reſolves, and ſtrives to get quit of it; he is not deprived of a good Providence, or of a gracious Spirit, but enjoys the benefit of them, and is conducted by them. He is in the way to Life, and under the recovering methods of Grace; Gods holy Spirit has not for ever abandoned him, but has begun again to work in him.

And thus at laſt it appears, that as for all the *wilful ſins* of any *Chriſtian* man, they are in no wiſe deſperate and helpleſs; but the Goſpel has reached out a remedy for them, to all who are willing to make uſe of it. For

let

let them but particularly repent of them, and amend them, and then they are ſafe from them. So long as they continue in the profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, and do not apoſtatize from it, there is no ſin whatſoever, which they wilfully commit, but is pardonable upon their repentance. If once they honeſtly undo the fault, and conſcientiouſly forſake it, their work is done; for their penitent reformation ſhall make them innocent, and whatever puniſhment the Law may threaten to any ſins, when God comes to Judgment, he will not exact it of any man, who has been thus reclaimed from them.

Do we find our ſelves guilty then of any unretracted wilful ſins, and thereby ſubject to a dreadful ſentence, according to thoſe meaſures that have in great largeneſs been hitherto diſcourſed of? Let us particularly repent of them, and begin to amend them, and then we are ſafe from it, and ſhall moſt certainly prevent it. Have any voluntary faults put us out of a ſtate of favour, and made us obnoxious to the ſeverities of Judgment? let us reform them, and do ſo no more, and repair the breach which enſued upon them, and we are ſurely pardoned. For the Goſpel of Chriſt doth not in any wiſe intend to amaze and aſtoniſh us, or to affright us from amendment, by putting us into a deſpair of mercy. No, we muſt lay this down as a moſt unerring Rule, That *that can never come from God, which tends to detain us in our ſins, and to diſcourage our reformation.* For the ſumm of all his deſigns and endeavours, both in the *ſending of his Son*, and in the *preaching of his Goſpel*, is to free and cleanſe us from all ſin, and to carry us on to reformation and repentance, by the ſure and ſtedfaſt hopes of pardon and acceptance.

Whenſoever we have *wittingly* done evil therefore, let

let us take care to do ſo no more; and if it were offenſive or injurious to our brethren, to repair the hurt our ſin has done, and all is well. And if any Law of the Goſpel threaten us, let us begin thus to fulfil it, and then we are ſafe from it. Let us fulfil it, I ſay, for that only is a ſaving repentance, which, as we ſaw above, implies obedience, and ends in reformation. And if we repent in that manner of any ſin, whatſoever it be, or whenſoever it be committed, whether *before Baptiſm*, or *after* it, it matters not, we ſhall ſurely go unpuniſhed, and ſhall not be eternally condemned for it.

CHAP. II.

Of Reconciliation, and Reſtitution, upon thoſe Sins whereby we have offended, or injured our Brethren.

The CONTENTS.

Of the Neceſſity of Reconciliation upon Sins whereby we have offended, and of Reſtitution upon others whereby we have injured our Brethren. In ſin three things conſiderable, the offence againſt God, and the offence and injury againſt men. Sins whereby God alone is offended, are ſufficiently repented of, and pardonable upon reformation and amendment. Thoſe whereby we have alſo offended, or injured our brethren, are not ſufficiently repented of, or pardonable upon that alone, unleſs moreover we ſeek to be reconciled, and make reſtitution. Theſe two means of pardon, for affronts, and injuries againſt men, are neceſſary fruits of a ſincere and ſuffi-

cient repentance. Of sins whereby we have justly offended our Brethren. Their ill effects represented, which are to be redressed by penitential acknowledgements, and seeking to be reconciled. These penitential acknowledgments necessary only to appease those, whom by our sin we have offended; and so unnecessary, when they know nothing of our offence. Where they do, Reconciliation is necessary so far only as it can be had, and where we have an opportunity of seeking it. This discourse upon Reconciliation sum'd up. Of sins of injustice, whereby we have injured men. Reparation ordinarily necessary to a sincere, and always to a sufficient Repentance of them. 'Tis necessary moreover in its self, as an instance of strict justice. An account of particular injuries, how to be repaired where the injured persons can, and how where they cannot receive it. Restitution necessary whether our Brethren know themselves to be injured by us, or no. It is due only upon sins of injustice. Of the perfect right which we have to things of strict Justice, and of the imperfect right which we have to things of Charity, whence the performance of them is sometimes called righteousness. In sins of injustice, reparation due so far only as we can, and according as we have opportunity to make it. In judging of a just opportunity, caution given that we be neither too strict, so as more than needs to prejudice our selves; nor too loose, so as to overcharge our Neighbours. This Discourse of reparation upon injuries summed up.

FROM what has been discoursed concerning *the remedy of wilful sins* in the *foregoing Chapter*, it plainly appears that they are not *hopeless*, but that at what time soever any of them have been committed by a *Christian* man, whether *before Baptism*, or *after it*, they are still *pardonable* upon his *particular repentance of them*.

This

This repentance, as has been ſhewn, implies *amendment*, ſo that we never ſhall be judged to have repented of them, till we have *forſaken* them, and are *reformed* from them. Amendment then is neceſſary to our repentance, and to the pardon of *all* voluntary offences whatſoever; and to the pardon of *ſome, viz. thoſe wherein God alone is concerned*, it is not only *neceſſary*, but *ſufficient*: but then to a *right repentance*, and to the *pardon* of *others*, which do not barely *offend God*, but are *offenſive* alſo and *injurious to our Brethren*, there is *more* required. For although God will forgive his *own* ſhare of any ſin, *viz.* ſo far as it is *an act of diſobedience to him*, and account us duly penitent upon our *amendment* and *reformation*; yet will he not judge ſo favourably, or ſo eaſily paſs over the hurt, which is thereby done to other men. And ſince in ſeveral ſins, there is not only an *offence to God*, but withal an *affront* or *injury* to *our Brethren*; whatever God may do in *ſome*, 'tis plain that he will not pardon *others*, or look upon us to have ſufficiently repented of them, upon a *bare forſaking* of the fault, without our ſeeking alſo to be *reconciled* to the offended perſons, and making of due *reparation*.

And this being a thing, which occaſions much *doubt* and *ſcruple* in many *honeſt* minds, I will here endeavour to give a plain ſtate of the Duty of *reconciliation upon offences*, and of *reſtitution upon injuries againſt our neighbour*, that ſo we may have no needleſs fears upon this account, or know how to put an end to them when we have juſt occaſion for them.

In ſin there are *three* things conſiderable, according as it may concern either *God*, or *men*, or *both*; *viz.* the *offence againſt God*, and the *offence*, and *injury* which it may include *againſt men*.

Firſt, As for *the offence againſt God*, as it is *a breach*

of his Law, and a *going croſs to his pleaſure*; it is atoned by *reformation* and *amendment*. Till we are reclaimed indeed from our *former* ſins, and are become Gods dutiful Sons, and faithful Servants, for the *preſent*, and for the *future*; it is not conſiſtent with the *honour of his goodneſs* and *holineſs*, with the *authority of his Laws*, and with the *ends of his Government*, to bear any *complacential love*, or ſhow any marks of *favour* and *friendly affection* towards us. But as ſoon as ever we are conſcientiouſly reformed from them, he will be reconciled to us. He will never puniſh us for any diſobedience againſt his *Divine Majeſty*, after we have forſaken it; but whenſoever we turn off from any evil way, ſo far as he *himſelf was concerned in the diſhonour of the offence*, he will graciouſly paſs it by, and, as may plainly appear from what has hitherto been diſcourſed, return to have mercy upon us.

But then as for the *offence*, and alſo as for the *injury*, which our ſins may at any time imply *towards men*; he will not judge us *ſavingly to have repented of them*, nor *pardon* them upon *amendment* alone, unleſs, together with that, we expiate the *firſt*, by *ſeeking to be reconciled to the Party whom we have offended*; and the *latter*, by *making amends for the damage done*, and *offering a due reparation*.

Theſe *two* means of pardon for our ſins of *affront* or *injury againſt men*, *viz.* our *ſeeking to be reconciled*, and *making all due reſtitution*, are no leſs *natural fruits* and *neceſſary effects* of *repentance* for *them*, than *reformation* and *amendment* is for *them*, and for *all others*.

For the moſt natural effect of a ſincere and ſufficient repentance, is to *undo the fault*, and *ſet things in the ſame place where they were before*: It implies a *change of mind from ſin*, that now our hearts and thoughts are ſet againſt it; which change is helped on and produced in

in us, by our *hatred of it*, our *grief* and *ſorrow for it*, and our *being aſhamed of it*: And the natural effect of a change of mind, of *hatred*, *ſhame*, and *grief*, where they are in any juſt degrees and perfect meaſure, is to *wiſh that the action* which cauſes them *had never been done*, and, as much as it is poſſible, *to undo it again*. So that if our repentance for any ſin is both *true* and *perfect*, if it implies an *undiſſembled hatred*, a *deep ſhame*, and a *great* and *hearty grief* and ſorrow for it; it will make us *cancel* and *undo* it, and take away, as far as can be, all the footſteps which it had left behind it.

And becauſe there are *more effects remaining after ſome ſins, than after others*; the *fruits of repentance are more for ſome, than they are for others*. For in *ſome* only *God* is concerned, as it happens in the *ſins of impiety*, and in *ſeveral inſtances of unſoberneſs*, when there is no *ſcandal* to our Brethren joined with them: and the breach in theſe being only in *God's Authority* and *Honour*, it is repaired by our beginning to *owne his Laws*, and the ſtain is wiped off by *amendment*, and *new obedience*. But in *others*, our *Brethren* are concerned too, as it falls out in all thoſe ſins whereby we *injure*, or *affront men*: and ſince there remains after theſe ſins, not only a *diſhonour of God*, but alſo a *laſting hurt* and *offence to our Neighbour*. The breach made by theſe is not repaired barely by our beginning to *obey God*, unleſs we alſo ſeek to *appeaſe* and *ſatisfie men*, by our *penitential acknowledgements* and *reſtitution*. And therefore if we are ſo far penitent, as to *retract* and *undo* our ſins, without which we are not duly *aſhamed*, or *ſorry*, nor *ſufficiently changed*, and *reclaimed from* them; we ſhall be ready, not only to repair the diſhonour which they caſt upon God, but the injury and offence which they gave to men too.

But in the account of theſe two inſtances of repentance,

tance, and means of pardon, to be more particular.

2. In ſin we are to conſider the *offence and juſt diſpleaſure which it gives to our brethren*, as it manifeſts our *contempt* of them, and our *hoſtile inclination* to inſult over them, or to vex and diſquiet them: and this is to be put away, by our *ſeeking to be reconciled with penitential confeſſions*.

In all ſins againſt *Juſtice* or *Righteouſneſs* towards all men in *general*, or towards any in thoſe *particular relations* wherein we may be concerned; there is not only an act of *diſobedience towards God*, but alſo of *affront*, or *injury againſt our Brethren*: And this, *if they underſtand it*, will beget an *alienation of mind*, and create *hard thoughts*, and *hoſtile inclinations*. For when they have obſerved our *contempt* of them, or our *ill will* to them, from our *mockery* and *contumelious uſage*, our *whiſperings* and *backbitings*, our *ſlanderings*, *falſe witneſs*, *fraud*, *cozenage*, or any other treſpaſs againſt them, whether to their *damage*, or only to their *diſparagement*, or *both*; they will have great reaſon to be *afraid* of us, and *offended* with us. They will think our ſociety unſafe, and either fly our company; or be jealous of us, and ſtand upon their guard, when at any time they are ſo unhappy as to be ingaged in it. So that upon theſe ſins againſt the *Honour*, *Perſons*, and *Eſtates* of our *Brethren*, when once they come to *underſtand* how they are damnified by them, there is not only an act of *diſobedience towards God*, but alſo a plain *breach* of that *friendſhip*, *goodwill*, and *mutual confidence*, which ought to be among men.

And now to *undo* all theſe evils which enſue upon theſe ſins, and to ſet things in the ſame ſtate which they held before; there muſt not only be an act of *reformation* and *amendment* to *appeaſe God*, but alſo ſome *outward indications of a change* to the *parties offended*,

ſtended, and ſuch *penitential acknowledgements*, as may *repair the breach which they have made among men.* We muſt let the perſons grieved *know*, that now we are *aſhamed*, and *ſorry* for our *fault*, that our *temper* is *changed*, and our *mind* is *alter'd*; ſo that they may ſafely venture to *return* again into *favour* with us, and never fear ſuffering the like indignities from us any more. And this now will *reconcile mens minds*, and *reunite their hearts*, and make them to become again *kindly affectionate*, *ſecure*, and *confident*, in the ſociety and converſation of each other. And when this is done, and they have both by reformation and amendment made their peace with God, ſo far as his honour was concerned in it, and alſo, by ſuch penitential acknowledgements, made their peace with men; they have undone, as much as is poſſible, all that was done amiſs, and ſuch repentance ſhall ſuffice, and prepare them for Gods pardon. And this is that which our Saviour expreſly requires of us, *Mat.* 5. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar*, ſaith he, *and there*, before thou offereſt it, *remembereſt that thy brother* hath taken juſt offence, and *hath ought againſt thee*, (whether upon account of thy *cauſleſs anger* in calling him *Fool*, and *Racha*, or uſing any other opprobrious language; or of any other affront, or injury whatſoever;) preſume not to think of appeaſing God before thou haſt appeaſed him, but *leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift* for thy reconciliation unto God, v. 22, 23, 24.

As for thoſe ſins then, whereby we have not only diſhonoured God by diſobedience, but alſo provoked and offended men by affront, or injury; to procure the pardon of them, we muſt not only ſeek unto God by reformation and amendment, but to them too by ſuch penitential acknowledgments as may repair the breach,

and

and reconcile the difference, which our ſins had made betwixt them and us.

But here we muſt obſerve, that as the neceſſity of ſuperadding theſe *penitential confeſſions* to our *amendment*, ariſes only from the neceſſity of *appeaſing men*, whom our ſins had offended: So whenſoever our treſpaſſes againſt them have given them *no offence*, there is no need of theſe *acknowledgments* for a *reconciliation*. And therefore in all our ſins againſt them, whereby we have either injured or diſparaged them, which they *know not* of, there is no need of it at all. For if they underſtand not that we have wronged or abuſed them, they cannot be angry at us for ſo doing; and ſo there being no breach made by our offence, there is no place for a reconciliation.

Yea I add further, if they are come to underſtand our offence, and have accordingly reſented it; there is not always ſtill a neceſſity of having them *actually reconciled*, but then only *when it can be had*, and *we have an opportunity of doing it*.

There is then only a *neceſſity of having them reconciled, when it can be had*. For ſome men are unalterable in their reſentments, and never lay them down; they are eternal in their hatred, and will not forgive an injury to their lives end. And with theſe, God doth not require that we ſhould actually be reconciled, neither will he be angry at us, when at laſt we miſs of it. He has not made *impoſſibilities* the *means of pardon*, nor will he make the *unconquerable obſtinacy* of one mans ſin, to be an article of anothers *puniſhment* and *condemnation*. And therefore when we have to do with ſuch men, we ſhall be accepted, if we *earneſtly ſeek reconciliation*, although we cannot *find* it. So that if in this caſe we *ſeriouſly expreſs our ſorrow*, and *beg pardon for our fault*, and *promiſe never after to repeat it*, and

and, *by our obliging carriage* and *after-kindneſs, endeavour to atone for our paſt offence*, and to ſhow them how *ſafely they may conſide in our preſent engagements:* if all this doth not melt them into a compliance, the *ſinful continuation* of the breach is now their *own*; but as for *us*, we have done enough to mend what was amiſs, and ſhall deliver our own ſouls.

And even with thoſe men *from whom it might be had*, there is then only a *neceſſity of an actual reconcilement, when we have an opportunity of doing it.* For in the *infinite mixture of converſation*, and *variety of company* which we meet with in this world, how univerſally are men, eſpecially of an *abuſive ſportful wit*, and a *proud petulant humour*, guilty of theſe offences towards thoſe perſons whom they ſhall never ſee again, and whom they know not *where* to find, or *when*. Now here, by reaſon of abſence of the perſons whom they ſhould make it to, an actual acknowledgment and reconciliation is impoſſible, and all that can be done towards it, is only *ſincerely* and *firmly* to reſolve to ſeek it whenſoever an opportunity ſhall be offer'd. And this *honeſt purpoſe of reconciliation*, till ſuch time as we have an opportunity to perform it, ſhall be every whit as available to our pardon, as if we were indeed reconciled. The *will*, as I have * ſhewn, *ſhall be taken for the deed*, where *'tis in our power to will only, but not to do*, and where *the deed would certainly follow, if there were but an opportunity to ſhew it in.* For in this caſe, the *Apoſtles* rule is ſure; *Where there is firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

* Book 1. c. 3.

As for the Duty of ſeeking Reconciliation then, where our ſin has given offence to men, it is plainly this: *If they know nothing of our fault*, they are *not angred*, and ſo have need of no *atonement.* But if they

do underſtand it, and *are offended* at it; we *muſt ſeek a reconciliation*, *if it can be had*, and *where we have an opportunity to endeavour it*. But if there be *no opportunity* of making our acknowledgments at *preſent*, we muſt *firmly purpoſe* it in our own minds, and *reſolve* to make it when a fitting ſeaſon ſhall be offer'd: and upon this *honeſt purpoſe*, which would prove effectual, were the perſons preſent, we ſhall be pardoned, as if we had performed it.

3. In ſin we are to conſider the *damage and injury, which it implies towards our Neighbour*, as it cauſes his *unjuſt loſs* or *hindrance*, whether as to his *Life*, *Liberty*, *Good Name*, or *Eſtate*; and this is to be expiated *by making amends for the wrong*, and *reſtoring what our injury took away, by a juſt and full reparation*.

How often doth mens *Envy* and *Revenge*, their *Covetouſneſs* and *Ambition*, render them, not only *offenſive* by *indignities* and *affronts*, but really *hurtful* and *injurious to their brethren*. They *blaſt their Reputation*, by *ſlanders* and *falſe reports*; they *ſpoil them of their Goods*, by *theft* or *oppreſſion*, by *fraud* and *cozenage*; they *rob them of their lives* or *liberties*, by *murder* and *falſe witneſs*; they *inflame their enemies*, *eſtrange their friends*, and *ſtop* or *deſtroy their preferment*, by their *malicious ſuggeſtions*, *unjuſt ſuſpicions*, and *ſpiteful repreſentations of them*. And when at any time we do thus by our Neighbour, he is really a loſer by reaſon of our ſin, and has juſt reaſon to complain of us, and to ſtand at a diſtance from us as dangerous and hurtful perſons, till we do not only *confeſs our fault*, and *ſeek a reconcilement*, but, moreover, make him a *juſt amends*, and ſet him in the ſame ſtate, if poſſibly we can, which he enjoyed before.

This we ſhall ſurely do, if we are *truly* and *compleatly penitent*; and till we have thus *reſtored a ſpoil*, and *repaired*

repaired a wrong, we cannot be thought *truly*, or at leaſt *perfectly* to have *repented* of it.

We cannot *ordinarily* be thought, I ſay, *to have repented of it truly*, but only *under a* * *falſe diſguiſe* and *vain hypocriſie*. For that is *ordinarily* no *true ſorrow*, which doth not *undo the fault*, and ſet things, as much as may be, in the ſame ſtate which they held before. We ſhall not be thought to be *really angry at the crime*, if ſtill we hold faſt the *bait*, *and are pleaſed with the temptation*. We ſhall not be eſteemed to *hate it*, ſo long as we are in *love with that which comes by it*; for we did not love it for *it ſelf* at firſt, but only for the *unjuſt gains ſake* which led us on to it; and if we yet hold that faſt, and will not reſtore it and let it go, 'tis plain we love it, and adhere to it for its ſake ſtill. So long then as men are pleaſed in the *fruits* of their injuſtice, and *continue the damage which their brother ſuffered*, or *hold faſt the unlawful gain which they themſelves acquired by it*; they cannot in reaſon be thought to *renounce* or *redreſs*, but to *juſtifie* and *confirm* it. They are reſolved to have their end in it, and to enjoy that by it which led them on to it; and this is not to be *puniſhed* and *afflicted for a fault*, but to be *enriched by it*; it is not *repenting of it*, but *owning* and *avowing* it.

* *Si res aliena, propter quam peccatum eſt, cum reddi poſſit non redditur, non agitur pœnitentia, ſed fingitur.* Aug. ad Macedon. quæ eſt Ep. 54.

But if the ſenſe of Gods wrath, which they have incur'd by their unjuſt dealings, ſhould put theſe men, who will not repair them, into ſome *real trouble of mind* and *grief of heart*, as ſometimes it doth; yet ſo long as they make no juſt amends, but ſuffer all the ill effects upon their brethren to remain, their *repentance*, ſuch as it is, although it be *real* and *ſincere*, is not yet *perfect* and *entire*, and *able to work that reformation which it is deſigned for*. Their mind is changed in part, but 'tis but half way; their ſorrow for their ſin is ſomething, but not enough; it would not have ſtrength

ſufficient to prevert the ſin, becauſe it cannot wean them from the temptation. For the *unjuſt gain* ſtill keeps poſſeſſion of their heart, and all their grief and change of mind is not able to remove it: their brothers loſs is ſtill their love and delight, and all their repentance cannot bring them to repair it. They ſtill adhere to, and love the *fruits of their offence*, more than they do the *rewards of amendment* and *obedience*: ſo that if they ſhould be tempted by theſe inducements again, they would have the ſame effect upon them which they had at firſt, and make them as unjuſt as they were before.

Thus neceſſary is *reſtitution* and *reparation of a wrong*, to evidence that men *truly*, and *perfectly repent* of it.

But beſides this way of its being neceſſary, *viz.* as a *neceſſary effect of a compleat repentance*; it is alſo *neceſſary in it ſelf*, as a piece of *common juſtice* and *natural equity*, without which no man, who has done wrong, can be an *equal* or a *juſt man*. For the great Rule of *Juſtice* is, *That every man ſhould have his own*, and *that no other mans force*, or *fraud ſhould ſpoil him of it*, or *any ways detain it from him*. So that if any man has *deſtroyed* or *waſted* any thing belonging to another, he muſt *make it up*; if he has *taken it to himſelf*, he muſt *reſtore it*. For whatſoever Goods he has wreſted wrongfully from his Neighbour, are not *his* Goods, but his *Neighbours* ſtill. For that which transfers *Propriety* from one *private perſon* to another, is *his own conſent*; this being the very nature of *Dominion*, that *a man may diſpoſe of a thing at his own will*, and *no other man may meddle with it, without he agree to it*: ſo that it muſt be his *own voluntary act*, and not *anothers force*, or *fraud*, that can *juſtly make an alienation*. If then one man wrongfully poſſeſſes anothers Goods, he is *no Owner*, but an *Uſurper*; he enjoys what belongs not to him, and cannot be a

juſt

juſt man, till he has cleared his hands of the others Goods, and made reſtitution.

Thus neceſſary is *reſtitution of unjuſt Poſſeſſions*, and *reparation of unjuſt damages*, not only *to evidence a ſincere* and *ſufficient repentance*, but alſo as an inſtance of *common Equity* and *natural Juſtice*, and to maintain a *mutual peace*, *ſecurity*, and *confidence* in the World. And therefore God, that he might take away *all temptation* to *ſportful*, or *malicious injuries*, and *unjuſt gettings* in *ſome*; and all *enmity* and *ſtrife*, *unſociable fears* and *jealouſies*, *murmurings*, and *complaints* by reaſon of them in *others*; has laid a great ſtreſs upon it, and made it plainly neceſſary to the obtaining of his * *pardon*. *Render to every man his due*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *and owe no man any thing*, *but to love one another*, Rom. 13. 7, 8. This is plainly neceſſary, and a duty that will not be diſpenſed with. For as *Ezekiel* ſays, it is not only, *if the wicked man turn from his ſin*, *and do that which is lawful and right*: but if, together with that, *he give again what he hath robbed*, that *he ſhall ſurely live*, *and not dye*, Ezek. 33. 14, 15.

* *Non remittitur peccatum, niſi reſtituatur ablatum.* Aug. ad Maced.

If then we are guilty of any injury, and have at any time wrongfully damnified our Neighbour; we muſt not only ſeek to be reconciled, and remove the offence, but withal we muſt repair the loſs, and make him in as good a ſtate, if by any means we can, as he was in before. And therefore if we have ſpoiled him of his *Goods*, by *fraud*, *oppreſſion*, or *robbery*; we muſt, in the fitteſt way which our *own prudence*, or the *wiſdom of our friends*, and *ſpiritual Guides* ſhall direct, *reſtore* them unto him again. If we have injured him in his *Good name*, and by *ſlanders*, *falſe ſtories*, and *malicious repreſentations* put a *blot upon his honour*, *advantaged his enemies*, *diſingaged his friends*, and *ſtopt his promotion*; we muſt *confeſs our fault*, and declare our miſcarriage,

we

we muſt *endeavour to wipe off* all the dirt which we have thrown upon him, and to ſet him *right* again in the apprehenſions of *all* men, but of *thoſe* moſt eſpecially, who by our means were brought to think ill and hardly of him. If we have wrongly deprived him of his *liberty*, or of any thing elſe, by *falſe witneſs*, or *corrupt judgment*, or any other way; we muſt take *ſhame* to our ſelves, and *clear up his innocence*, and take off all the *undeſerved reproach*, and all the *criminal diſguiſe*, wherein we had involved him.

As for ſome injuries, 'tis true, they *never can be repaired*, nor is it poſſible to make the perſons whole again, who ſuffered by them. Of which ſort are *Murder*, *Adultery*, a *cuſtomary conſtant fraud in traffick*, and the like. But although the damage in theſe can never be *intirely* repaired, yet in *part* it may; and when we cannot do as much as we ſhould, 'tis but juſt and neceſſary that we do as much as we can. And therefore in thoſe injuries whereby *many are made to ſuffer*, as it ordinarily happens in *murder* and *adultery*, which damnifie not the *perſons injured* alone, but their *Families* alſo and *Dependants*; we muſt make reſtitution to thoſe that *can*, that we may be pardoned for neglecting thoſe, who *cannot* receive it. And if *few* of the injured perſons are to be met with, as it happens through the *infinity of Sufferers* by a *conſtant fraud in commerce*; there cannot be a better *commutation*, than to put *the poor into their place*, and make the needy their Receivers. Which exchange was moſt commendably reſolved on by a *great offender* in this kind, *viz. Zaccheus*, the *Chief* among the *Publicans*. For when he comes to repent of his *Publican* ſins, at Chriſts calling of him *Luk.* 19: he makes his penitential profeſſion thus; *If I have taken away any thing by falſe accuſation*, or unjuſt force, ſays he, *from any man*, whom I know and can repay again; according as the

the * Law preſcribes in that Point, *I reſtore him it* again *fourfold.* And as for all other exactions which can never be particularly repaid, whereof I, and generally †all in my imployment are guilty without number; I endeavour to atone them, according to the * *Jewiſh* cuſtom, by giving as much, or more to the indigent and needy in their ſtead: for *behold the half of my Goods I give unto the poor*, v. 8.

* Exod. 22. 1.

† πάντες τελῶναι, πάντες εἰς τὸ ἀργύριον. *Dict. Zenon. Comœd.*

* *Vid.* Di. *Light.* Hor. Heb. in loc.

Thus is reſtitution to repair the damage, as neceſſary as confeſſion is to atone the offence, which our ſins have given to our Brethren. And this it is, whether our Brethren *know of* the unjuſt loſs or hindrance which we have cauſed to them, or no. As for the *confeſſion of our fault*, to have the offended party reconciled; that, 'tis true, is neceſſary only to make peace where they have taken offence, and therefore it is of no neceſſity where they do not know our ſin, becauſe there they cannot be offended by it. But as for the *reparation of unjuſt damages*, that is neceſſary out of natural equity and ſtrict Juſtice, ſo that we are bound to it whereſoever Juſtice is infringed, and any one is injured, whether he underſtands it, and be offended at it, or no. If then our Neighbour knows he has been injured by us, and is offended at it; we muſt not only make reſtitution to repair his loſs, but alſo beg his pardon to atone the offence, and to procure a reconciliation. But if he is wronged and knows it not, we need make no acknowledgements, 'tis true, ſince he has no need to be reconciled; but ſtill we muſt make a juſt amends, and repair the damage, be the way of doing it never ſo private, and managed with as much diſcretion, as can be uſed about it.

But to prevent *needleſs fears*, as well as to preſs a *neceſſary practice* in this Point; I think it not amiſs to add theſe limitations to the *obligation* of this *Duty, viz.*

that

that we are bound to it only *in matters of ſtrict Juſtice, not of Charity and Courteſie*; and *there too only ſo far as we can, and as we have an opportunity to perform it.*

Firſt, We are *bound to make amends and reſtitution only upon ſins againſt ſtrict Juſtice, not upon ſins againſt Charity.* All reſtitution muſt be of ſomething, whereto another man has a *full* and *compleat right*, otherwiſe it is not *reſtoring*, but *giving* it. It is returning of a thing to its right Owner, and putting him into poſſeſſion, who has the juſt title and propriety. Now ſuch right as this no man has to things of *Charity*, but only to things of *ſtrict Juſtice.*

'Tis true indeed, there is a certain dueneſs in *them*, as well as there is in *theſe*; we ought to *give Alms*, as well as to *perform Contracts*; to be *grateful, compaſſionate, courteous*, and *condeſcenſive*, as well as to *reſtore a pledge*, or *fulfil a bargain.* Theſe Points of *Charity*, as well as thoſe of *Juſtice*, are due from us, and ought to be performed by us: and ſince there is a *Duty on our parts to beſtow*, there muſt be anſwerably ſome kind of *right in others to receive* them. So that even the inſtances of kindneſs and Charity, are in ſome ſence a matter of right and duty; and becauſe thoſe who receive them are not altogether void of title, but have ſome right to them, they are oft times in Scripture called works of *righteouſneſs*, and the perſons who perform them, are called upon that account *juſt*, or *righteous men.* Thus where we read, *Take heed that you do not your* * *Alms before men*; it is read by ſeveral Copies, *Take heed that you do not your* † *righteouſneſs before them*, Matth. 6. 1. The *merciful* men, *Matth.* 25. who are deſcribed by their *Compaſſionateneſs, Alms*, and *Hoſpitality*, ver. 35, 36: are called the *righteous* men in the next Verſe, *Then ſhall the righteous ſay, Lord, when ſaw we thee an hungred?* &c. *ver.* 37. Thus the *charitable*

* ἐλεημοσύνην.
† δικαιοσύνην.

table Lender is called a *righteous perſon*, *Pſal.* 37, the *righteous is merciful, and lendeth*, ver. 25, 26; *and Joſeph's* being a *pitiful, kind Husband*, and *unwilling publickly to expoſe his Wife Mary*, whom *he found with child before they came together*, but reſolving to *put her away privily*, is called *his being a* i *juſt man*, Matth 1. 19.

i δίκαιος ὢν.

Some right then our Brethren have to our works of *mercy*, *liberality*, *gratitude*, *candor*, *affability*, *courteſy*, and other inſtances of *common charity*: So much dueneſs there is in them, and ſo much right and title they have to them, as can denominate them *works of righteouſneſs*, and us, who perform them, *juſt* and *righteous men*. But this right is much leſs than that, which they have to all expreſſions of *ſtrict Juſtice?* and is rather *an imperfect draught* and a *beginning of right*, *than right* it ſelf. For all *full* and *perfect right bectows a title*, it inveſts a man in *propriety*? ſo that what he has a compleat right to, he may juſtly call *his own*. And ſuch a right as this all men have to the *ſafety of their perſons*, *goods*, and *reputations*, and all other things which are a matter of *ſtrict Juſtice*. They have a full claim to them and cannot, without their own conſent, be deprived of them: and therefore if any private perſon like themſelves damnifies them in theſe, they may juſtly complain he wrongs them, and demand ſatisfaction? and when they receive it, they do not *thank* him as for a *free* and *charitable gift*, but look on it as their *own*, and accept it as a *debt* and *neceſſary reſtitution*. Thus full and perfect is that right which men have to things of ſtrict Juſtice, it inveſts them with propriety, and makes the things which they have a right to, to become their own; ſo that 'tis no gift, nor *thank-worthy*, when other men, either *perform at firſt*, or, after injury, reſtore it to them.

But as for that *right*, *which men have to all expreſſions of kindneſs and charity? it founds no full claim, nor in-*

veſts a man with Lordſhip and Propriety? ſo that he muſt owne *anothers kindneſs* when he receives them, and cannot ſay he is deprived of his own, when they are withheld from him. This Right does not confer Propriety, but doth only ſomething towards it? it makes it anothers duty to give, and his gift muſt compleat our Title, and beſtow a perfect Claim to it. Thus, for inſtance, if any perſon has an opportunity put into his hands, *to be helpful to a man in want, or miſery*; when the needful perſons *ask an alms*, they do not *demand a debt*, but *intreat his charity*; they do not exact what is *their own*, but beg what *is his*; ſo that he has an opportunity, not of *doing Juſtice*, but of *ſhewing kindneſs* and charity when he gives; and they are under a duty of *acknowledging his kindneſs*, and *being thankful* when they receive it. And the caſe is the ſame in *gratitude*, *candor*, *courteſie*, and other inſtances of Love and Charity. The right which any man has to them is not ſo full, that he can ſay they are his own; there is a duty indeed on other men to give, and that *gift may make them his in time*; but till that is done, he cannot ſay he is injuriouſly deprived of any thing which of compleat right belongs to him, or require that they who have taken nothing that is his from him, ſhould repair the loſs, and make a reſtitution.

Reſtitution then in tranſgreſſions againſt ſtrict Juſtice is a duty, becauſe there men are deprived of that which is really their own; and it is but juſtice, and not thank worthy, that he who deprives them of that, ſhould give it back again, and reſtore it to them, But in ſins againſt meer Charity, it is no duty; for there, ſince men have loſt nothing that is their own, they can demand nothing to be reſtored to them. By theſe *ſins of uncharitableneſs* indeed God *is diſhonoured*, and by our *amendment that muſt be repaired*; our *Brethren* are

are ſometime *juſtly offended*, and when they are ſo, by our *penitential acknowledgment they muſt be reconciled*; but by a bare uncharitableneſs none of them is *injured*, ſo that there is no unjuſt loſs which ſhould be repaired, nor any thing taken from them, which ought again to be reſtored to them.

2. We are bound to make *amends for injuries*, and to *reſtore* that which was taken away by them, *ſo far only as we can*, and *as we have an opportunity of doing it*.

We are bound, I ſay, to make *reſtitution ſo far only as we* k *can*. Some injuries in the *nature of the thing* can never wholly be repaired, as *Murder* and *Adultery*, for which ſatisfaction cannot be made to the *perſons principally concerned*, but only to their *families* and *dependants*. Others cannot be compleatly recompenſed, becauſe of the *number of perſons* that ſuffered by them, many whereof will never be ſeen again, or are forgotten; as it happens in a *cuſtomary conſtant fraud in commerce*, which cannot otherwiſe be perfectly requited, than by putting the *poor into their ſtead*, or by ſome other *pious* and *religious commutation*. And others, laſtly, cannot have a compleat amends, by reaſon of *our inability compleatly to amend them*. Some *croſs accidents of Providence*, or ſome former *vices* or *careleſneſs of our own*, (which, though now we repent of, yet we cannot help,) have made us *poor*, and ſo unable to preſerve all from being loſers by us, and to reſtore to every man again what at any time we had injuriouſly ſpoiled, or taken from him. And now, when by any of theſe ways *reſtitution is impoſſible*, and a thing which the *trueſt penitent* cannot perform, God will not exact it of him. If he doth *what he is able*, when he *cannot do all*; if he reſtores the damage to the *injured perſons dependants* and *relations*, when he can make no reſtitu-

k *Non remittetur peccatum, niſi reſtituatur ablatum; ſed cùm reſtitui poteſt.* Aug. Ep. ad Maced. quæ eſt Ep. 54.

tion *to himſelf*; or if he reſtores it to *charitable* and *religious uſes*, when he *can do neither*; or if, laſtly, he *confeſs his fault*, and *beg pardon*, and *be forward to return ſervice and good offices* when he can make *no other reſtitution at all*; he has done what a *true penitent* ought to do, and God will graciouſly accept him. His *will* ſhall be taken for the *deed*, ſince it is in his power to will only, but not to do; and through his honeſt readineſs and endeavours to perform it, if he could, he ſhall be interpreted to have performed it.

We are bound, I ſay again, to make an actual reſtitution only *when we have an opportunity of doing it*. An *honeſt purpoſe*, as was ſaid above, ſhall be accepted for all *affirmative precepts*, till there be a ſeaſon offered for an *actual performance*. When there is an opportunity for it, we muſt not only will, but do and practiſe them: but till that happens, all that God expects, or that we can do, is to reſolve to practiſe them, as we ſhall find occaſion. And therefore if honeſtly we ſeek an opportunity to repair a wrong, but cannot find it: let us not diſturb our ſouls with fears and ſcruples, but reſt in peace; in confidence that our honeſt purpoſe ſhall bear us out, till Gods Providence affords us an opportune ſeaſon, wherein we may perform.

And in judging of this, *when a fit ſeaſon is come*, and *when ſuch an opportunity is offered as we are bound to make our reſtitution in*; we muſt neither be *too ſtrict* and *rigorous*, nor *too gentle and remiſs*.

We *muſt not be too ſtrict*, and tye our ſelves up to ſo much quickneſs in reſtoring, as to run upon *great inconveniencies*, that are of far more weight than the thing is worth, to *prejudice conſiderably our own affairs*, and *neglect*, it may be, ſome other as *weighty duties*, rather than *delay a little longer*; eſpecially when it may be done at *another time* as well as *then*, and the damage, which

which the *injured perſon* ſuſtains by ſuch *delay*, is nothing in reſpect of that which *we* incur by a *precipitate diſpatch* of it. Under ſuch incommodious circumſtances we may be allowed to put it off a while, and we need not fear leſt our brother ſhould be offended, or farther injured by ſuch delay, ſince we have *juſt reaſon to preſume he willingly agrees to it*. For thus far we may reaſonably preſume upon the *free conſent* of all the *converſable part of mankind*, that, out of *common humanity* and *compaſſion*, they will be content to deny themſelves in *ſmall* things, to advantage us in *great* ones; and to want ſome *ſlight* conveniencies themſelves, rather than put us, for the ſupplying of them, to deprive our ſelves of ſuch as are *conſiderably weightier*. And where we have ſo good a reaſon to *preſume of their conſent* to it, we ſhall not be treſpaſſers againſt them, or any ways offenſive to them, by our delaying of it.

But then, on the other hand, we muſt not be *too remiſs* and *partial to our ſelves*, in judging of a fitting ſeaſon for ſuch a reparation, nor prone to preſs upon our brethrens wants and inconveniencies, but to ſpare our own. We muſt not refuſe an offer, becauſe it is joyned with *ſome pains*, and clog'd with *ſome difficulties*, and may occaſion *ſome loſs* and *hindrance* to us, or *additional expence*. Our ſlowneſs in returning a juſt amends at any time, but chiefly where the *opportunities for it are more uncertain*, muſt not be ſuch as argues that we *ſeek to excuſe it*, or are *very indifferent to it*, and *eaſily put by it*: it muſt not ſeem to intimate that we are *in ſuſpenſe about it*, or have not *perfectly reſolved upon it*, or, at leaſt, that the performance of it is a *forced, ungrateful thing*, ſo that we would not come to it ſo long as we can find any pretence to turn it off, or are able to overlook it. For this ſhews evidently that our *repentance is without zeal*, that our *ſorrow is without*

out life, and that, at beſt, we are acted only by an *imperfect* and *inſufficient*, if not alſo by an *unſincere purpoſe*. And therefore to *vindicate* the *honour*, and *perfect the degrees* of *our repentance* and *obedient purpoſes*, which are abſolutely neceſſary to our pardon and acceptance, we muſt ſhew ſuch an *overplus of affectionate haſte* to repair our injured brothers loſs, as manifeſts that we are more concerned for him, than we are for our ſelves, and that we regard the pains and burden of our own part much leſs, than in all rational preſumption, were he to judge of it, he himſelf would. This we ſhall do where the *ſorrow* for our ſin is great: where we have a high *zeal* againſt it, and have *fully* and *compleatly repented* of it: and when we are actuated and carried on by theſe, they will prevent all doubts, and never ſuffer any *hard* and *uncertain queſtion* about the fitneſs of the opportunity, to come into a debate of Conſcience. But if men have not ſo much *love* for the duty of Reſtitution, and ſo much *zeal* in their repentance, as will make them overlook *little things*; if their repentance has no more warmth than is juſt neceſſary to make them do what is indiſpenſably to be done, ſo that they come to *weigh ſcruples*, and nicely to debate whether ſome *doubtful hindrances* are *ſufficient* to delay their reſtitution, or no: the beſt way that I can adviſe them, is to refer their *brothers loſs in wanting for ſome time*, and theirs in *making* a *preſent reparation*, to the judgment of their *ſpiritual Guides*, or any other *wiſe Adviſers*; and then peaceably to acquieſce in that courſe whereto thoſe wiſe and good men ſhall direct them.

As for the duty of *making reparation* then where our ſins have *injured men*, it is plainly this. In ſins which are not only againſt *Charity*, but alſo againſt *Juſtice*, whereby we have wronged any man either in his *Perſon*, *Goods*, or *Reputation*; whether he *knows* that we have

have injured him or no, we muſt *make a juſt amends* and *reſtitution.* This muſt be made, *where it can*, to the *injured man himſelf*; and where *that is not to be done*, to his *family* and *dependants*; and, *where that is impracticable* too, to the *poor*, or to God *himſelf*, by ſome *charitable* or *pious commutation.* And this we are bound to do *ſo far as it is in our power*, and *according as we can find an opportunity*; being *deſirous of it*, and *fully reſolved upon it when we want one*; and *doing as much as we can* towards it, and *asking pardon for that wherein we fail, when we are disabled from doing all.* It is not enough after theſe ſins to *do ſo no more*, unleſs, according to theſe rules, we make *amendment* for what we have done already. *Reformation* and *forſaking* of *the fault* will atone for any other *wilful* ſin, whereby we have *offended none but* God: and *that*, and, *penitential acknowledgments*, will expiate thoſe whereby we have *offended* both God and *men*; but if we have not only *offended*, but *wronged* alſo and *injured* them, we muſt not only *amend our fault* to *pleaſe* God, and *penitently acknowledge* it to *appeaſe them*; *but*, as ever we would ſecure the pardon of it, we muſt *reſtore the ſpoil*, and *repair the wrong*, and ſet them, as far as may be; in as good a ſtate as our ſin took from them.

CHAP. III.

Of the Remedy for our involuntary Sins.

The CONTENTS.

Involuntary ſins imply ſomething of our own fault, and ſo 'tis fit we ſhould be ſorry for them, and beg pardon.

They

They had a remedy under Moſes's *Law, and have now likewiſe under Chriſts Goſpel. We are qualified for their pardon, not by a particular repentance and reformation: but in the general, by our obedience in all our wilful and choſen actions; in particular, by our prayers for Gods pardon, and our Charity and forgiveneſs of the ſins of other men. This Diſcourſe of Repentance ſummed up. An Application to particular offenders, whether voluntary or involuntary. A Summary of all that has been hitherto diſcourſed.*

HAving ſhewed in the *former* Chapters what remedy Chriſts Goſpel has afforded us for the moſt dangerous ſort of offences, *viz.* our *choſen* and *wilful ones*? I ſhall proceed now in this to inquire what remedy he has likewiſe provided for our *involuntary* and *unchoſen ſins*.

As for our involuntary ſlips themſelves, they alſo come under the *Letter of the Law*, and within the compaſs of the Penalty. They are a doing what the Law forbids, and ſo an incurring of that evil which it threatens. For the words of the Law it ſelf are unlimited and univerſal, they make no exception of voluntary or involuntary, conſidered or unconſidered; but they require that ſomething ſhould be performed or omitted, and threaten us if we do it not. So that if they were to be tryed by the *ſtrictneſs* and *rigour of the Laws*; even our involuntary ſlips themſelves would prove a matter of our condemnation.

But if God ſhould proceed to judge us, I will not ſay according to what the compaſs of the *literal Law* would comprehend, but, even according to the utmoſt of what the *juſtice of the thing* would bear, the greateſt part of our involuntary ſins would be charged upon us. For how few are there who live up to the *utmoſt of their*

their poſſibilities; but they fall ſometimes where they might ſtand, and are raſh in ſome inſtances, when, if they had uſed due care, they might have deliberated. We do not come up to that, which, according to the higheſt ability of our natures, and the utmoſt ſtretch of our faculties, might be done: and therefore ſetting aſide the rigour of the Letter, which requiring more than can be performed, muſt threaten where the puniſhment that is threatned cannot in juſtice be exacted: yet ſhould God proceed with us for *moſt* of our involuntary ſlips according to the utmoſt ſeverity which Juſtice it ſelf would bear, we ſhould be in an evil ſtate, and give in a ſad account for them. So that we have need to be *ſorrowful* even for the *greateſt part* of our *involuntary ſins*, and to *beg Gods pardon for them*, that all the defects of our care may be made up by the riches of his mercy and goodneſs.

And as for the reſt of them, which ſteal from us, not ſo much through any thing of our *culpable neglect* as our *unhappineſs*, and are purely involuntary and unavoidable; an *after-grief* is neceſſary in them alſo, although it be only to *evidence our involuntarineſs* in doing them, and that our wills were perfectly againſt them. Becauſe, as was obſerved above, our *ignorant offences* themſelves cannot in reaſon be eſteemed *involuntary*, further than we ſhew our wills to be ſet againſt them, by our *trouble at them*, and our *prayers for pardon*, when afterwards we come to diſcover and underſtand them. So that ſome *repentance* is ſtill due, even for our *involuntary and unchoſen ſins*, and they muſt have our *ſorrow* and our *prayers*, before they are fit to be forgiven.

And here we all experience the abundance of Gods Love; for he allows for theſe pitiable infirmities, and has provided us of a remedy, which if we make uſe of,

we ſhall never be condemned for them.

Under *Moſes's Law* theſe involuntary ſlips of ignorance and inconſideration, being they were continually incurred, were allowed the benefit of a continual atonement. For God himſelf appointed ſeveral Sacrifices for them which ſhould expiate their guilt, ſo that every man, who was ſubject to them, was furniſhed with a ſufficent remedy againſt them.

And as they had their remedy and relief under the *Law of Moſes*; ſo ought they to have much more under the *Goſpel of Chriſt*. And in this our Lord has not been wanting, but has afforded us a Salvo for them; ſo that although we are all of us guilty of them, yet none of us need to ſuffer for them.

But now as for *this remedy*, which Chriſt has preſcribed for the Expiation of our *involuntary ſins*; it is not the *ſame* which he requires to the Expiation of our *voluntary and wilful ones*. For that, as we have ſeen, is nothing leſs than a *particular repentance* and amendment, in the forſaking of that very ſin which we committed wilfully. But as for our involuntary ſins, this can be no cure for them, becauſe it is impracticable, and not poſſible to be effectually uſed about them. For we ſhall always live ſubject to them more or leſs; and although we may labour and ſtrive againſt them, yet ſhall we never be able, as long as we are in this world, to get entirely free from them. We have no power and choice to avoid what we cannot ſee and conſider of, and all theſe ſins come in upon the account of our unwill'd ignorance, or inconſideration; and ſince we cannot ſee and conſider of them, we cannot particularly prevent them, which is effectually to repent of them.

A *particular Repentance* and *Reformation* then is not the Goſpel-remedy for our *involuntary ſins*. It cannot be the cure aſſigned for them, becauſe it is impoſſible

to

to them; their pardon muſt not depend upon it, becauſe then they were wholly impardonable and deſperate, ſince, in them, no man on earth can uſe it.

But that remedy which Chriſt has appointed for them, and that repentance, whereupon he will graciouſly pardon and forgive them, is, in the *general*, an *hearty* * *repentance and reformation of all wilful ſins, and an entire obedience in all ſuch actions as are voluntary and choſen.* If we ſerve God faithfully and truly in all our other actions, where we do ſee our duty, and can chuſe to practiſe it; he will connive at theſe ſlips, which, after an honeſt care and induſtry, are involuntary and unchoſen. For any *kind maſter* would do ſo to his *honeſt ſervant*; and more eſpecially every *tender father* would to his *obedient child.* And God, who is *Love it ſelf*, being the *firſt Fountain* and the *compleateſt Pattern* of all kindneſs in the world, will never be out-done, in any *love that is excellent* and *praiſe-worthy*, by his own creatures. But if their kindneſs would bear with ſuch infirmities and overſights of an honeſt mind, his will diſpenſe with them much rather.

* ἀπολελύσθω μὲν τὰ ἀνήκοα τῇ ἀμώμῳ βουλήσει αὐτῶ ἀποβίψαντες ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν πᾶσαν ἀδικίαν, καὶ ἀνομίαν, πλεονεξίαν, ἔριδας, κακοηθείας, δόλους, μιθυσμὸς, καταλαλίας, ἀσεβηφανίαν, &c. —— αὕτη ἡ ὁδὸς, ἀγαπητοὶ, ἐν ᾗ εὑρέσθη τὸ σωτήριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ πρωτάτλως καὶ βοηθὸν τῆς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 35, 36.

The faithful ſervants therefore and obedient children of God, who repent particularly of all their other ſins that are known and wilful, and effectually amend *them*; ſhall be ſure to find this favour, at the hands of their heavenly Lord and Father, for all theſe failings which are involuntary and unchoſen. Their obedience in other things ſhall plead their excuſe, and make their unwill'd ſlips in theſe to be uncondemning.

But to be yet more particular, theſe involuntary tranſgreſſions of men that are obedient in all their voluntary actions, ſhall certainly be pardoned through the means of theſe *particular* duties.

1. Their *Prayers.*

2. Their *Charity*, and *forgiveness towards the offences of others.*

1. Their involuntary failings of ignorance and inconsideration, shall be forgiven them *upon their prayers*; if they beg Gods pardon for them, he is as ready to grant, as they are to desire it. And this we are sure of, because that no *earthly Parent*, who is wise and good, would refuse to bestow it in such Cases at the request of his Children; whereas they have nothing near that pity and tenderness for *their* Children, which God has for *his.* And this is an Argument, which Christ himself has taught us to rely upon in this matter: *If you*, says he, *being evil, will* yet, for all that, at their request *give good gifts to your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father*, who has not the least taint of your illness, *give* the best of gifts, even *the Holy Spirit, to them that ask him?* Luke 11. 13.

And indeed, that we may never want this remedy, Christ has put a Prayer for this purpose daily into our mouths; that since our involuntary sins are of *daily incursion*, we may as *daily beg pardon* for them. For he has made it a part of our *daily prayers* to ask pardon, among others, for our *daily trespasses*, this being one of those Petitions which he has taught us to put up, as often as we do that for our daily bread, that he would *forgive us our trespasses*, Matth. 6. 11, 12. And this St. *Austin* observes of it; * *for those small sins*, saith he, *which no man can avoid, was this Petition in the Lords Prayer inserted.*

* *Tenete vitam bonam in Præceptis Dei, ut Baptismum custodiatis in finem. Non dico vobis quia sine peccato hic vivetis: sed sunt venialia, sine quibus vita ista non est. Propter omnia peccata Baptismus inventus est: propter levia, sine quibus esse non possumus, Oratio inventa. Quid habet Oratio? Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut nos dimittimus Debitoribus nostris. Semel abluimur Baptismate, quotidiè Oratione.* August. de Symb. ad Catechum. in Art. de Remiss. Peccat. l. 1. c. 6.

Nay,

Nay, long before him, St. *Clement* teaches the ſame Doctrine, of *our prayers being a moſt ſure expiation for all our involuntary ſins.* For, in his *firſt* Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, relating that truly Chriſtian ſtate, wherein their great Apoſtle *Paul* had very lately left them; among ſeveral other parts of their Character, he gives this for one: **Being filled with holy deſires, and a virtuous will, with a good and commendable forwardneſs of mind, and with a pious aſſurance of being heard, you lifted up your hands to Almighty God, beſeeching him to be merciful and propitious to you, if in any thing you had ſinned* INVOLUNTARILY. Having firſt, as ſays the good Father, a *vertuous heart*, and a *holily diſpoſed will*, ſo that in nothing their heart was diſobedient by ſinning wilfully; they were *forward to ask God forgiveneſs* for all thoſe ſins, which they had committed involuntarily. And this *forwardneſs*, ſays he, was †*good* and *commendable*, and their confidence of obtaining pardon upon their prayer, was *pious*; it was a **godly* and a *pious confidence.*

* Μετὰ τε ὁσίας βουλῆς ἐν ἀγαθῇ προθυμίᾳ μετ' εὐσεβοῦς πεποιθήσεως, ἐξετείνατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν πρὸς τὸν παντοκράτορα θεὸν, ἱκετεύοντες αὐτὸν ἵλεως γένεσθαι, εἴτι ἄκοντες ἡμάρτητε. Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Cor. c. 2.

† ἐν ἀγαθῇ προθυμίᾳ. * μετ' εὐσεβοῦς πεποιθήσεως.

This is a *plain* and *full* teſtimony, and withal it is *authentick*, and ſuch as we may rely upon as much in a manner as if an *Apoſtle* himſelf had told us ſo. For this *Clement*, as we may obſerve, was one who was ſent out by the Apoſtles themſelves to preach Chriſt's will, and intruſted by them to declare unto the World what are the terms of remiſſion of ſins, and the condition of pardon; ſo that what we hear from his mouth we may look upon as *Goſpel.* St. *Paul* himſelf makes *honourable* mention of him, calling him his *Fellow-Labourer: Help Clement my Fellow-Labourer, whoſe name is in the Book of Life*, Phil. 4. 3. And the thing it ſelf which he teſtifies, is not ſo much a matter of *faith* and *opinion*, where-

in

in an honeſt man may ſometimes erre and be miſtaken; as an *hiſtorical relation* of a matter of *fact*. For he is recounting what a brave and gallant Church they were in that ſtate, wherein the great Apoſtle left them: and as one of the *Particulars* of that relation this comes in, That as for their *involuntary ſins they begged Gods pardon*, and that too *with a pious aſſurance of obtaining it*. So that as for this practice, of a *confident hope of pardon for their involuntary ſins upon their prayers*, it was not only ſuch as St. *Clement*, the *Companion* and *Fellow-Labourer* of St. *Paul*, approved; but ſuch moreover as the *Apoſtle Paul* himſelf, who had planted Chriſtianity amongſt them, had left with them.

This therefore is one great remedy for our involuntary ſlips, *They ſhall be forgiven us upon our prayers for pardon and forgiveneſs.*

And ſo ſhall they,

2. Upon our *Charity*, and *forgiveneſs of the offences of others.*

As God himſelf delights in *mercy*, ſo doth he require that we ſhould; and to oblige us to it the more, he has made our kind dealing towards our Brethren, the † Condition of his kindneſs towards us. *Above all things*, ſays St. *Peter*, *have fervent Charity among your ſelves; for Charity ſhall cover*, or procure pardon for, *the multitude of* thoſe many, becauſe unavoidable and involuntary, *ſins*, 1 Pet. 4 8. And hereto Charity is then eſpecially available, when it is ſhewn in the higheſt inſtance of all, *viz.* in *procuring our Brethrens repentance* and *converſion*, for thus ſays St. *James*, *Brethren, if any of you do erre from the truth, and one convert him*; for his encouragement *let him know* this from me, *That he who converts the Sinner from the errour of his way, ſhall* not only *ſave* the others *ſoul from death*, but *ſhall* alſo *hide a multitude of* his own *ſins*, James 5. 19, 20.

† Luke 6. 36, 37, 38.

Thus

Thus in Charity, in all acts of *kindneſs* and *beneficence*, moſt available to procure the pardon of our *many*, becauſe *unavoidable*, and *involuntary ſins*. But among all the inſtances of Charity, *one* is particularly ſingled out by our Saviour, as a neceſſary Condition to our forgiveneſs at Gods hands, and that is *our forgiving others that offend againſt us*. For the man *who would have no pity upon his Fellow-Servant as his Lord had ſhewed upon him*, was *unpardoned* all again, and *delivered over to the tormentors till he ſhould pay the uttermoſt Farthing*, Matth. 18. 32, 33, 34; and the *ſame* meaſure our *heavenly Father will mete to us, if we forgive not every one his Brother their treſpaſſes*, v. 35. And that a Condition ſo neceſſary to our forgiveneſs might never be forgotten, our Lord has put it expreſly into that Prayer, which he has taught us to put up daily for the pardon of our own ſins. For he bids us pray that *God would forgive us our treſpaſſes againſt him*, even *as we forgive thoſe that treſpaſs againſt us*, Matth. 6.12. And that we may take the more notice of a Point ſo indiſpenſable, he tells us, as ſoon as ever the Prayer is done, that *if we forgive men their treſpaſſes, our heavenly Father will alſo forgive us; but if we forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us our treſpaſſes*, v. 14, 15.

If we are rigorous and ſevere therefore with our Brethren, God will be ſo with us alſo; and when he comes to judge us, we ſhall find as little allowance at his hands, as they have done at ours. For *he ſhall have judgment* from God *without mercy, who* to men *hath ſhewn no mercy*; but if any man has been merciful to his Brethren, God will be much more ſo to him; for *mercy rejoyceth* even *againſt judgment*, James 2. 13. This will be the greateſt motive to procure Grace, and the beſt Plea that can be urged to obtain mercy at Gods hands; *Bleſſed are the merciful*, ſays our Saviour, *for they ſhall obtain mercy*, Mat. 5.7.

And

And thus as for our *involuntary ſlips*, we ſee now what is their remedy; they ſhall be forgiven us upon *our prayers*, and upon *the prayers of our friends* and *other good Chriſtians for us*; and upon *our Charity* and *forgiveneſs of other men. With the ſame meaſure that we mete, God will mete out to us again*, Mat. 7. 2. So that if we ſhew mercy to the unwill'd ſins, yea, and the voluntary offences of other men; if in other things we are obedient, we ſhall be ſure to find it for our own.

And thus at laſt we ſee what remedy the Goſpel has provided us for all ſorts of offences, whether they be our *voluntary*, or *involuntary* ſins. And upon the whole matter we find that our caſe is not deſperate under any ſort of ſins, but that if we will uſe it, we have a ſufficient cure for them. For if we are in a ſtate of death by reaſon of any *wilful* ſin; let us but *particularly repent of it* and *amend it*, and, if it either *injured* or *offended our Brethren, ſeek to be reconciled* and *repair the wrong*, and we are reſtored to pardon. And if in any thing we have fallen *involuntarily*; let us but *pray* and be *merciful*, and we are forgiven. And either way, when God comes to judge us, whether we have in all points *fulfilled his Laws*, or are *pardoned our tranſgreſſions of them*, we ſhall be *acquitted by him*. We ſhall be ſafe at that day, if we have either *kept the condition*, or *uſed the remedy*; for a *pardon* will juſtifie us to as much purpoſe, as we ſhould have been juſtified by an *unerring obedience*.

To apply this then to every mans particular caſe. Has any man, whether *learned* or *unlearned*, committed *wilfully* and *adviſedly* an act of any *known* and *notorious* ſin, whether of *Blaſphemy*, *Perjury*, *common Swearing*, *Witchcraft*, *Idolatry*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Fornication*, *Adultery*, *Lying*, *Slander*, *Fraud*, *Oppreſſion*, *Theft*, *Murder*, *Rebellion*, *Tumult*, or the like? has he been guilty

guilty of theſe, or of any other ſins of like nature, whereat all mens conſciences are wont to boggle, and their hearts to check them, till they have ſinned themſelves into numbneſs and ſtupefaction? let him *particularly amend that evil way*, and *retract that very ſin*, and, if his crime implied any, as far as he can, *repair the wrong* he did his brethren; and then he is in a ſafe condition. For his particular repentance and amendment ſhall make up the breach, which ſuch wilful offence had made betwixt God and him, and ſhall moſt certainly procure his pardon.

Has any man of opportunities and underſtanding committed any action of *Laſciviouſneſs*, *Uncleanneſs*, *Paſſionateneſs*, *Fierceneſs*, *evil Speaking*, *Backbiting*, *Cenſeriouſneſs*, *Uncandidneſs*, *Unmercifulneſs*, *Unpeaceableneſs*, or the like? has any ſuch man, or *any other whatſoever*, been guilty of *theſe*, or the *like* offences, when his own *Soul reproved* him, and either did, or would have ſet the ſinfulneſs of his preſent action before him, unleſs he has ſinned in it ſo long, as to loſe all ſenſe of it, and to ſtifle all ſuggeſtions againſt it? let him alſo *particularly* amend and reform ſuch voluntary ſin, and make his peace with his offended brethren, that he may be ſaved. His particular repentance ſhall likewiſe make his peace, and procure for him Gods favour and acceptance.

Has any man, laſtly, been *ſurprized* into *raſh words* and *cenſures*, into *ſudden anger*, and *trifling diſcontents*, and *peeviſh*, or *uncourteous*, or *uncandid*, or *uncondeſcenſive behaviour?* has he been *wearied* by long importunity into ſome *looſe thoughts* and *wanton fancies*, into ſome *ſmall fretfulneſs*, or *impatience*, or the like? has he ſpoke or acted unadviſedly through *deep grief*, or *violent fears*, or other *aſtoniſhing unwill'd paſſion?* let him *bewail his failings*, and *ſtrive* againſt them, although

he be not able perfectly to overcome them; let him ſeek peace, and *uſe charity*, and *ſhew mercy* upon the like errours and eſcapes, and upon the more wilful offences of his brethren, and then with comfort *beg Gods pardon*. For his prayers thus attended ſhall ſet him ſtraight, and procure his reconciliation.

If a man is *conſcious* to himſelf of any of theſe ſorts of ſins, theſe remedies will certainly reſtore him. And as for thoſe *unknown* and *ſecret ſins*, whereof his conſcience cannot inform him; he has an obvious and an eaſie expedient, for a *general penitential prayer* will undoubtedly be accepted for his pardon.

Whatſoever therefore his ſins be, if he pleaſe to make uſe of it, he is provided of his remedy. Repentance ſhall ſurely ſave his Soul, and make atonement for all his offences. So that of whatſoever *nature*, *number*, or *degree* his faults have been, after once he has thus repented of them, they ſhall never be imputed to him; but through the Merits of Chriſts Death, and the Grace of his Goſpel, they ſhall be looked upon as if they had never been.

And thus at laſt we have ſeen what that *condition is*, *which the Goſpel indiſpenſably exacts of us towards our acceptance* in the laſt Judgment, what *thoſe defects are whereof it allows*, and what *thoſe Salvo's for all ſorts of diſobedience which it offers*. For it *requires an entire obedience of all our voluntary actions*, it *bears with all our innocently involuntary failings*, and it *admits us to recover our former ſtate* when once we have loſt it, or to *perſevere in it* when we enjoy it, by a *particular repentance* and *amendment of all our wilful ſins*, and by our *prayers* and *charity for our involuntary ones*.

This then is the true Teſt whereby at the laſt Day we muſt all be tryed. If we have *obeyed entirely*, and *have been guilty of no wilful ſin*; or if, when we have,

we

we *did not reſt in it*, but *repented* and *amended it*, and, where there was any, *repaired the wrong*, and *ſought to be reconciled*; and if we have *beg'd pardon for all our involuntary ſlips*, and have been diligent in *ſhewing charity*, and *mercy*, and *forgiveneſs*, *to atone for them*: then are we *innocent in the accounts of the Goſpel*, and when Chriſt comes to judge us, we ſhall hear the joyful ſentence of *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*, Mat. 25. 34. This repentance and obedience will bear us out, and ſecure our happineſs; but leſs than it nothing in the world will. For *God will take vengeance*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *on all that obey not the Goſpel of Chriſt*, 2 Theſſ. 1.8. and, *Except you repent*, ſays our Saviour, *you ſhall all periſh*, Luk. 13. 5.

And thus having ſhewn *what condition that is*, *which the Goſpel indiſpenſably exacts to our acceptance in the laſt Judgment*, *what defects are conſiſtent with it*, and *what remedies when once 'tis loſt*, *ſhall again reſtore to it*: I ſhall now proceed to that, which I propoſed in the *fourth* and *laſt* place; namely, to *remove thoſe groundleſs ſcruples*, *which perplex the minds of good and ſafe*, *but yet erring and miſguided people*, *concerning it*; whereof I ſhall diſcourſe in the *remaining Chapters*.

CHAP. IV.

Of ſuch groundleſs Scruples, as make ſafe, but weak Minds, doubt of their Title to Salvation.

The CONTENTS.

Pious minds ſcrupulous. There condition is ſafe even then, but uncomfortable. Several needleſs grounds of their fears.

fears. 1. *Ineffective deſires of evil. This repreſented. No man otherwiſe good ſhall be condemned for ineffective luſts and thoughts of evil. Theſe are conſiderable, either as to their firſt birth, or indulged continuance. The firſt ſtirrings of luſts after evil things are unavoidable. The after entertainment is by our own indulgence. Even theſe are uncondemning ſo long as they neither are conſented to, nor fulfilled, being in themſelves not deadly under the Goſpel, but a temptation to deadly and damning ſins. The way whereby ſin wins upon men, and the nature and force of temptation. To be tempted is no ſin, which is proved from the nature of temptation, from* Adams *being tempted before he ſinned, and from Chriſts being tempted who knew no ſin. Degrees in temptation or in luſts of evil. Some are checked quickly, and are not permitted long to parly. This happens only in grown men and perfect Chriſtians, and that too not in all inſtances. Theſe certainly are not damning. Others ſtay longer, and ſtrive and contend with our mind or conſcience, although at laſt they are vanquiſhed by it. This happens ordinarily to younger Converts, and in extraordinary temptations to grown Chriſtians. Theſe ſtill are uncondemning, which is ſhewn from* Gal. 5. 16, 17; *and from the inſtance of our Saviour Chriſt. What luſts and deſires of evil are damning. They are condemning when they make us conſent to a damning ſin. A diſtinct account of the ſeveral ſteps to a ſinful action. A proof of this, that from their gaining of our conſent, in all the after-ſteps they are mortal. Our luſts muſt be mortified to that degree, as to be diſabled from carrying us on thus far. This is done when men become true Chriſtians. The better men are, the leſs difficulty and ſelf-denial do they find in mortification. Watchfulneſs and ſtrife ſtill neceſſary. The danger of indulging to temptations, or to luſts and deſires of evil. This point ſummed up.*

IN

IN matters of Religion and another World, nothing is more ordinarily obſervable, than that thoſe people are wont to have the greateſt fears, who have the leaſt reaſon for them. For good Chriſtians, although they think the beſt of others, are generally very ſuſpicious of themſelves. They have a deep ſenſe of the danger of ſin, and a full conviction of the fatal end of diſobedience; and that makes them think, that in a matter, wherein it ſo highly concerns them not to be miſtaken, they can never be over-jealous of their own hearts, or too cautious, leſt after all, thoſe inſupportable puniſhments of ſin ſhould fall to be their own portion.

And this they do eſpecially, if in any *material point*, whereupon as to the Sentence of Life or Death, the Goſpel lays a great ſtreſs, they are *ignorant* and *erroneous*. For there are no terrors in the World that are comparable to thoſe of Religion, nor have any men upon earth ſo much reaſon to be afraid, as they who are in danger to fall under them. And therefore if there is any thing which will be of great account in the laſt Judgment, or, what is all one, which they think will be ſeverely accounted for; and they either find themſelves to be guilty of it, or, which comes to the ſame thing, fanſie that they are: they muſt needs be fearfully perplexed, and deprived of all *peace* and *comfort*, though really they are in the greateſt *ſafety*. 'Tis true indeed, that in the end they ſhall be no loſers, nor ſhall their *miſtaken fears* ever be *fulfilled* upon them; becauſe at the laſt Day God will judge them according to his own Rule, and not according to their errours and miſapprehenſions of it; ſo that if they have really done all that which he requires to Heaven and Happineſs, he will think well of them, notwithſtanding they think never ſo hardly of themſelves. Their errors

ſhall

ſhall in no wiſe pervert his Truth, for he ſees what they are, howſoever they may miſtake it; and if he ſees them to be righteous, his ſentence will follow his own knowledge, and he will declare to all the world that they are ſo.

This is the *ſecurity* of all *good men*, as it is the *eternal terror* and *aſtoniſhment* of all *hypocrites* and *ſinners*, that they ſhall be brought before an *unerring* and *uncorrupt Judge*, who can neither be bribed nor deceived, and who cannot miſtake them, or wrongfully condemn them, howſoever they may miſtake, or wrongfully condemn themſelves. And ſince it is ſo, they are really ſafe in their own goodneſs, when they moſt of all ſuſpect their own danger; and ſecure from evil, even whilſt they are afraid of falling under it.

But although every good man is in this *ſafety*, let his underſtanding of himſelf be what it will; yet if in any of thoſe things which he takes to be a matter of life or death, he judges wrong of himſelf, and thinks erroneouſly, he can enjoy no *peace* and *comfort*. He will go to Heaven full of fears, and forboding thoughts; and never think himſelf in the way to Bliſs, till he is actually inthroned in it, and poſſeſſed of it. He will meet indeed with happineſs in the end, but he will have no ſight or expectation of it in the way; for all his life long he will be tormented with doubts and ſuſpicions, fears and jealouſies; and be ſtill by turns concluding himſelf loſt as to the next World, though he be loſt no where but in his own fancy. And this imagined future miſery, will bring him under a real one for the preſent; it will make him have ſad thoughts and a ſorrowful heart, it will bereave him of all joy and peace, and almoſt overwhelm him in groundleſs perplexity and vexation.

But that pious Souls may not fear where no fear is, nor

nor torment themſelves with unreaſonable expectations; having before ſhewn what that condition really is which renders any mans a ſafe condition, I will go on now to remove their groundleſs ſcruples and miſtakes concerning it, by ſhewing, *what*, and of *what force thoſe things are, which are wont, without any ſufficient reaſon, to diſquiet the minds, and to diſturb the peace of good and ſafe, but miſtaken Chriſtians, about it.*

And as for the *cauſes of good mens fears*, ſo far as I have been able to learn them, they are chiefly theſe that follow.

1. Good men are wont to call in queſtion the *ſaveableneſs of their preſent*, and the *happineſs of their future ſtate*; becauſe after all their care againſt them, they find that *ſome motions of the fleſh, ſome ſtirrings of their luſts, ſome thoughts of evil do ſtill ariſe up in them.* They feel themſelves ſubject to delightſom fancies, and deſires of forbidden things. They are liable to a *luſtful thought*, a *covetous wiſh*, an inſurrection of *anger*, of *envy*, and of ſeveral other damning ſins. 'Tis true indeed, that theſe luſts do not reign in them, becauſe they do not conſent to their inſtigations, nor do what they would have them. They can only inhabit and ſtir in them, but have not ſtrength enough to give Laws to them; for they repreſs them before they get ſo far, and prevail over them, before they go on to fulfil what they inclined to. Not any of theſe ſinful luſts, whereof they are afraid, has got ſo much power over them, as to carry them on, either to *conſent* to them, or to *fulfil* them: for though they may *think* on ſome forbidden things in their *minds*, or *deſire* them in their *hearts*; yet do they not *will* and *chuſe* any of them, and leaſt of all do they *work* and *practiſe* them. They may perhaps have a thought and fancy, a wiſh and inclination after *unchaſt* pleaſures; but they correct themſelves there,

there, and go no further, for they never in their hearts conſent to an *unlawful embrace*, nor ever proceed to an *unclean action*. In a ſudden motion of *anger*, it may be, they may have ſeveral *expreſſions of wrath*, and *inſtances of revenge* occur to their *thoughts*, and obtruding themſelves upon their *fancy*; but they ſtop there and go no higher, for they do not conſent to utter an *injurious word*, or to commit a *ſpiteful action*; and the ſame they experience by themſelves in other inſtances. In all which, ſeveral forbidden things will get into their *thoughts* and *deſires*, and ſteal from them a *wiſh* or *inclination*; but when once they have done that, they can do no more, being unable either to gain their conſent, or to command their practice, ſo as that they ſhould not only deſire, but alſo chuſe and fulfil them. But although they do not ſuffer ſin to reign in them ſo as to *conſent to it*, or to *fulfil it in the luſts thereof*; yet they fear leſt their *very thoughts* and *inclinations after it* ſhould prove *damnable*. For God requires the obedience of our *whole man*, of the *mind* and *affections*, as well as of our *wills* and *actions*; and he is diſobeyed by *any*, as well as by *all* our faculties. And ſeeing every ſin is forbidden under pain of death, who knows but that this admiſſion of ſin into our thoughts and deſires is a deadly tranſgreſſion. This is one great cauſe of fear, and a rock of offence, to truly honeſt and good men.

But to take off all doubt and ſcruple upon this account, we muſt know that *our impotent luſts* and *ineffective deſires of evil things, if they are able to get no further than a thought or a wiſh*, though at preſent they are a *matter of our exerciſe* and *humiliation*; yet at the Day of Judgment they ſhall be no *Article of death or condemnation*. For Chriſts Goſpel doth not ſentence us ſeverely upon theſe firſt *motions of a luſt*, or *beginnings*

nings of a ſin; no, if they arrive no higher than *fancy* and *inclination*, through the merits of Chriſts Sacrifice there is Grace enough in ſtore for them, and in the Goſpel account they are not grown up to be a matter of Death, nor come within the Confines of deſtruction.

That I may ſpeak with the more diſtinctneſs to this Point, I will here ſhew theſe two things:

1. That *for our feeble luſts and deſires after evil, which are unconſented to, and unfulfilled, we ſhall not at the laſt day be condemned.*

2. For *what luſts and deſires of them we ſhall.*

1. I ſay, *For our feeble luſts and deſires of evil, which are unconſented to, and unfulfilled, at the day of Judgment no man otherwiſe good ſhall ever be condemned.* God will never ſentence us to Hell for every *ſudden deſire*, and *inclination after ſinful things*; but if it reſts there, and goes no further than bare deſire, he will pardon and paſs it by, but not eternally avenge it.

To ſpeak *diſtinctly* to this Point, theſe *luſtings* and *deſires* are conſiderable, either as to their *firſt birth*, or as to their *indulged* and *allowed continuance*: the *firſt* are *never* damning, and the *latter many times* are no Article of condemnation.

As for our bodily luſts and deſires of evil, in their *firſt birth*, I ſay, *they are never damning, nor ſhall any man, who is otherwiſe vertuous* and *obedient, be ever judged to dye for them.*

And if it were otherwiſe, who could poſſibly be ſaved? For as long as we live in this World, we have all of us theſe *firſt motions* of appetites after evil things, more, or leſs; and there is no avoiding of it. For the Laws of God, which are impoſitions ſuperinduced upon our Natures, by their prohibitions make ſeveral of our moſt *natural appetites* and *deſires* themſelves to be

ſinful; the *luſts of the Fleſh* making up a good part of the *prohibitions* of the Goſpel. But although God, by his after prohibition, has made them ſinful, yet from that natural neceſſity, which he had laid upon us before, we cannot live intirely free from them. For our Fleſh will luſt, and make offers after ſuch things, as are naturally fitted to its liking; and we cannot help it: becauſe our Bodies, ſo long as they are converſant among the things of this World, from their natural frame and conſtitution will ſtill be *delighted* with ſome things, to *crave* and *deſire*; and *pained* by others, to *hate* and *abhor* them. This, I ſay, is *natural*, whilſt there is any life and ſenſe in our Bodies, the good and evil things of the world muſt of neceſſity thus ſenſibly affect them; and where they are affected with pleaſure, there 'tis natural for them to deſire; as where they feel pain, 'tis natural for them to abhor the thing, which occaſions and produces it.

Theſe *firſt* luſtings then and cravings after forbidden things are natural, and were made neceſſary, before the prohibition came to make them ſinful. And if by an after-Law men ſhall be condemned for being ſenſibly affected with outward things, or for having a ſudden luſt and inclination after them upon their being ſo ſenſibly affected with them; then ſhall they be condemned for what they could not help, and dye for not performing impoſſibilities.

But God neither *can*, nor *doth* make any Laws, which exact things ſo rigorous: He *puniſhes nothing in us, but what proceeded from our own will*, nor exacts an account of us for our *natural luſts* and *inclinations*, further than they are ſubject to our *own choice* and *free diſpoſal*. If a *ſudden fear*, or an *unclean deſire* ariſe up in the heart of an *holy man*, from the *preſence* of *outward objects* or *inward imaginations*, and the *natural temper of his*

his Blood and Spirits; he ſhall not be put to anſwer for it, becauſe he could not prevent it. He could no more hinder it, than he can hinder the *beating of his heart*, or the *motion of his blood*; ſeeing it was no free work of his *will*, but a natural effect of his *temper*. And to be condemned for that, is to ſuffer for having *fleſh* and *blood*, as well as *Reaſon* and *Spirit*; and to undergo puniſhment for being made up of *Body* as well as *Soul*, for being a *man* and not an *Angel*.

As for ſeveral things indeed, which follow upon the *firſt ſuggeſtion of a prohibited object*, and upon the *firſt luſting* after it: they are not the effects of *nature*, but of our own *choice*. For though a *fancy* of *evil*, and a *ſudden luſting* after it from its fanſied agreeableneſs, may obtrude it ſelf upon us whether we will or no, either by *chance*, or by *occaſion of a temptation*: yet a *continued entertainment of it*, and a ſtay upon it in our imaginations, to cheriſh luſt, and inflame deſire, cannot come upon us but by our *own liking* and *connivence*. For as ſoon as ever we can obſerve them, our thoughts are our own, to diſpoſe of *how*, and upon *what* we pleaſe. The *firſt thought*, 'tis true, is not always in our power to hinder, becauſe many times it comes upon us e're we can obſerve it. For our ſouls, as I have ſometimes ſaid, are ſouls in fleſh, and make uſe of our bodily powers in their moſt ſpiritual operations; being linked ſo faſt to them, as that they cannot but communicate and be affected with them. But then the *ſtay* upon it, and the *continued attention* to it in after-entertainment, is a thing that cannot be ſo ſuddenly forced upon us, but we give way to it only *when*, and *how long* we our ſelves pleaſe. So that whatſoever the *firſt fancy* and *deſire* of evil was, the *after entertainment* is our own; ſeeing it came not from any neceſſity of nature, but from the free determination or connivence of our own will.

But yet even theſe *after-thoughs* and *inclinations after forbidden things*, are not *always* an Article of our condemnation; but then only, when we *conſent* to them, or *practiſe* and *fulfil* them. For if the forbidden thing is only fanſied in our minds, and craved by our appetites, but has got no conſent of our hearts, nor any endeavours of our lives and actions: according to the gracious terms of that Goſpel, whereby we muſt ſtand or fall, it is not yet come within the terrours of Judgment, nor has made us liable to Death and Hell.

For the evil and danger of our *bodily deſires*, we muſt know, is the evil and danger of a *temptation*. When our *appetites deſire* what the prohibition has made *evil*, and our *Spirits*, on the other ſide, declare what the Commandment has made *good*; then is the time of *temptation* or *tryal* whether our wills are reſolved to ſtick to our *luſts* or to our *Duty*, and whether they will prefer God or ſin. And herein lyes the great danger of our natural appetites; for although *in themſelves they are not deadly and damning to any man otherwiſe good*, yet are *they traps and ſnares to deadly and damning ſins*.

In *themſelves*, I ſay, *to any Chriſtian man, who is otherwiſe good and vertuous, our natural appetites are not deadly and damning*. The luſting and inclination of our *Fleſh* after *Meats* and *Drinks*, and after *eaſe* and *pleaſures*; and the luſting of the *eye* after *gain* and *riches*, are not *abſolutely* and *directly forbidden*, or in *themſelves*, and before they have got any further, an *Article of our condemnation*. No, all the deſires of the Fleſh are naturally neceſſary, ſome to preſerve our *own perſons*, and ſome to the *preſervation* and *propagation of Mankind*. This God himſelf has made, and he allows of it. It is no mans ſin to have a *ſtomach to his meat*, or to have *deſires after eaſe*, and a *fleſhly inclination after bodily pleaſures*: becauſe God has ſo framed our Bodies that they ſhould,

ſhould, and therefore he cannot be angry with us if we do deſire them. Indeed he has not left theſe deſires to their own ſwing, but has put ſeveral reſtraints upon them: he has bound them up from *ſome objects*, and in *ſome degrees*. For we are forbid to deſire and luſt after *meat* and *drink*, *eaſe* and *pleaſure*, *riches* and *plenty*, when either we are *injurious* to other men in procuring that which we luſt after, or when we are *exceſſive* and *intemperate* in the uſe of it, or for its ſake *tranſgreſs any other Commandment*. Our *deſires of meat* and *drink*, for inſtance, muſt not carry us on to exceſſive meaſures in *gluttony* and *drunkenneſs*; our *carnal luſts* muſt not draw us on to act them with undue objects, in *fornication*, *adultery*, *rapes*, or other *prohibited uncleanneſſes*; and our *deſire of money* muſt not betray us into *thefts* or *robberies*, *fraud* and *circumvention*, *extortion* and *oppreſſion*, *niggardlineſs*, *uncharitableneſs*, or other ſins, whether againſt *Juſtice*, or *Charity*. As on the other ſide, our *fears* and *averſations* from *want*, or *pain*, or other *bodily evils*, muſt not induce us to *neglect a Commandment* that we may pleaſe our Fleſh, or to *deny our Religion* for the ſecuring of a bodily enjoyment. Theſe reſtraints God has laid upon our bodily appetites, having given us theſe Commands, with ſeveral others mentioned above, which we are oft-times tempted to tranſgreſs in order to the fulfilling of them. For our bodily appetites themſelves do not *diſtinguiſh*, either of *objects*, or of *degrees*. A mans *palate*, or his *ſtomach*, in any delicious meat or drink which yields a pleaſure to it, doth not tell him when they have enough, or ceaſe deſiring, before they are gone on to be intemperate. Our *eyes* luſt after money, but they conſider not whoſe it is; but, ſo they may have it, they matter not to whom it belongs, or how they come by it: and ſo it is in our fleſhly appetites of other things. For it is the natural pleaſure of

thoſe

thoſe things which we luſt after, that moves our bodies; and therefore they luſt after them ſo long as they are pleaſed with them. They never ſtop at a fixt meaſure, or turn away from a forbidden object; ſo that if we will be ruled by them, they will carry us on to any thing that agrees with them, whether it be *lawful* or *unlawful*, and ſo are ſure to inſnare us into ſin. And here indeed God has ſet a ſtrict reſtraint upon them, and will puniſh them ſeverely if they go beyond it. For

Then, as I ſaid, our *luſts are deadly to us, and articles of our condemnation, when they have damning effects*, and *enſnare us into deadly and damning ſins*. To any good man, the bare luſts and deſires of evil are not ſo truly a *damning ſin*, as a *dangerous temptation*; they are not in themſelves an Article of Death to him, but they are apt to carry him on to that which is. For that which puts any ſin into a capacity to tempt us, is our luſt or deſire of ſomething which is annexed to it, and which we hope to obtain by it. There is always ſomething that goes along with it, which is naturally fitted to pleaſe our fleſh, and to excite a carnal appetite; and by this we are tempted, and allured into the practice and commiſſion of it. For *bare* ſin could never tempt any man, nor could any one in his wits ever chuſe to diſobey for diſobedience ſake, without any thing further: becauſe there is no good in tranſgreſſion, nakedly conſidered, which ſhould move any mans will to chuſe and embrace it; but on the contrary, much evil, that will diſſwade and affright him from it. For it deprives us of *Gods favour*, and *ſubjects us to his vengeance*, and *fills us with ſad hearts*, and *anxious thoughts*, and *terrible expectations*. But that which wins us over to a liking and approbation of it, is the appearance of ſome *pleaſure*, *profit*, *honour*, or other annexed

annexed allurement, which we expect to reap by it. It is one or other of theſe that overcomes all our fears, and inveagles us into the commiſſion of it; for they ſtrike in with our natural appetites, and raiſe in us deſires after it; and thoſe prove the bait which draws us in, and the inſnaring temptation.

For herein lies all the *force* of any *temptation: The ſatisfaction of a luſt is joyned with the acting of a ſin, which is an invitation to us for the ſake of the one to commit the other alſo.* The tranſgreſſion has ſomething annexed which is agreeable to our fleſhly Natures, and raiſes in us deſires of it, and cravings after it; and when it has got this hold of us, it draws us as much as we can be drawn by our love of our own luſts, and the gratification of our bodily appetites; which is indeed a great ſtep to our choice and commiſſion of it, and a ſtrong temptation.

For this is the *natural order* of our *actions*; either our *Conſciences* or our *Paſſions move* and *excite* us to them, and then our *Wills chuſe* and *intend* them, and upon that choice and intention our *Underſtandings contrive* and *direct*, and laſt of all our *bodily* and *executive Powers fulfil* and *perform them.* All our bodily actions are at the choice, and under the command of our wills, and all our choice is upon the appearance of ſome good or other, which either our conſciences, or our fleſhly luſts and appetites propoſe to us. For our wills, we muſt remember, are placed in a middle ſtate, and are canvaſed and beſet on both ſides, our luſts being urgent with us to conſent to one thing, and our conſciences to another. And this is that *ſtrife betwixt the fleſh and ſpirit*, which is mentioned in the Scriptures; and that contention which S. *Paul* deſcribes in the 7th Chapter to the *Romans*, between the *Law of luſt in the members*, and the *Law of God in the mind.* Theſe *two* Princi-

Principles, our *Body* and *Spirit*, or our *Luſts* and our *Conſciences*, are thoſe great Intereſts that vie and ſtruggle in us, and emulouſly contend which ſhall obtain the conſent and choice of the will of man. And whenſoever either of them has got that, our actions follow in courſe. For our bodily members move at our own choice; and therefore if our luſts after the pleaſures of ſin have once prevailed upon our wills to conſent to it, they have gained their point and their work is done, and we ſhall go on, without more ado, to act and commit it.

In this then lies all the force of a temptation, that the ſin, which we are tempted to, has ſomething annexed to it wherein our fleſh is delighted, and which it luſts after and deſires for the ſake of that pleaſure which it finds in it. And when by this means any ſin has got our fleſhly love and deſire, it has got a powerful friend in our own boſoms. For our luſts are ſtrong and violent, and where they ſet upon a thing, they will not eaſily be denyed, but are urgent and importunate with our wills to conſent to their gratification, and yield to the fulfilling of them. So that if once any ſin has ſtruck in with them, it is able to try its ſtrength, and contend with the Law of God in the mind; being furniſhed now with a powerful bait, and a ſtrong temptation.

Thus are our luſts and deſires of forbidden things, not the forbidden ſin it ſelf, but the temptation to it; ſo that in bare luſting or deſiring of them, we do not commit the damning ſins themſelves, but are tempted only to their commiſſion. And in this S. *James* is moſt expreſs; for *then*, ſays he, *every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſts, and enticed* to evil by them, *Jam.* 1. 14.

And as for *meer temptation* to a damning ſin, it is not

not deadly and damning. For our being tempted to ſin is not a renouncing of our Lord, but an exerciſe of our ſervice and obedience to him, and a tryal whether or no we will renounce him. It is the great proof and argument how dearly we love him, and how cloſely and faithfully our wills adhere to him. It ſhews how obedience is uppermoſt in our hearts, and that we will rather deny our deareſt luſts and importunate deſires, than venture, for their ſakes, to offend him. So that to be tempted is no inſtance of damning diſobedience, but a plain proof how much we will loſe and ſuffer, rather than we will diſobey. It is a tryal of us how we prefer God and our Duty before other things, even thoſe that are moſt dear to us of all things in the world beſides. We do not ſin damnably then in being tempted, ſo long as we conſent not to it, but manfully reſiſt and overcome the temptation.

And this is evident from hence, becauſe *thoſe very men who have lived moſt free from ſin, have not for all that lived free from temptation.* Even *Adam himſelf*, before he knew what ſin was, and during his ſtate of Innocence, was liable to be tempted. For the Tree of *Knowledge of good and evil*, whereof God had forbidden him to eat, was *alluring to his eyes*, and an *incentive to his luſt*, as well as any other Tree of the Garden. And becauſe it was ſo, the Woman was won to eat of it through the ſtrength of ſuch deſire after it, notwithſtanding God had commanded her to abſtain from it. *The woman ſaw that the Tree was good for food, and pleaſant to the eye, and ſhe took of the fruit thereof, and did eat*; and by the ſame inducement ſhe drew in her Huſband, and *gave it unto him, and he did eat* alſo, *Gen.* 3. 6. And the *ſecond Adam*, who was moſt entirely innocent and guilty of no ſort of *a* ſin, was yet liable to temptation like as we are, being *in all points tempted*

a 1 Pet. 2. 22. John 14. 30.

like as we are, yet without ſin, Heb. 4. 15. Nay, ſays the Apoſtle, it was neceſſary that he ſhould be ſo; that by what he felt in himſelf, he might the better know how to ſhew mercy & have compaſſion upon us. *In all things*, ſays he, *it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful*, as well as a *faithful High Prieſt; for in that he himſelf hath ſuffer'd being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted*, Heb. 2. 17, 18.

As for our being tempted then, or invited to any ſin by our bare luſts and inclinations after it; in it ſelf, and before it has got any further, it is no deadly ſin or damnable tranſgreſſion. It is the *ſcene of good endeavour*, the *tryal of obedience*, a *teſt of our great love and preference of God and his Law before all the world beſides, yea, even before our own deareſt luſts, and our own ſelves. It is nothing more than befel* Adam *before he had ſinned*, or *than befel Chriſt who never knew ſin*; and therefore in it ſelf bare luſt and deſire, or being tempted and invited to ſin, cannot be damnably ſinful.

As for our *Luſts* or *Temptations*, 'tis true they differ in *degrees*, according as our deſires of that evil which we are tempted to are indulged, and have advanced more or leſs. For ſometimes a *luſt may ſtir*, but as *ſoon* as ever it is *obſerved* it is *again extinguiſhed*. The pleaſure of the ſin, whether by being ſeen or fanſied, raiſes in us a ſudden thought or deſire after it; but the luſt is expelled as ſoon as it is diſcovered, it is not ſuffered to remain and dwell in us, but is preſently thrown out with indignation. For we turn away our fancy from the evil thing, and will not endure to think upon it, or to continue craving and luſting after it. And this is a power over our own deſires, and a way of breaking the ſtrength of temptation, which is incident only to *grown men*, and to *perfect Chriſtians*: and that not in all inſtances of temptation, but only in ſuch as are not

extra-

extraordinary in themſelves, and which have been *often vanquiſhed* and *triumphed* over. It is in ſuch caſes, where uſe has made the conqueſt eaſie, and long cuſtom of ceaſing and turning away from the inveigling deſire has taken off all the difficulty; ſo that now we are able to ſilence and ſubdue the luſt, as ſoon as we diſcern it. And as for theſe feeble deſires and impotent temptations, there is no queſtion but that a good Chriſtian may be under them, and yet be in no danger of being condemned for them.

But then at other times our *luſts live longer*, and *advance higher*; they grow up to good degrees, till they are able to contend and ſtrive againſt our mind and conſcience; ſo that even when at laſt they are denyed, and our wills chuſe to do what God commands in ſpite of them; yet is it after much ſtruggling and oppoſition. The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, as well as the ſpirit luſteth againſt the fleſh; and although at laſt the fleſhly luſts are over-power'd, and cannot prevail with our wills to chuſe on their ſide; yet do they ſtrive hard, and contend for it. And here a luſt is not preſently ſubdued as ſoon as it is diſcerned, but it ſtrives and ſtruggles; it can make head againſt the Law in the mind, although it cannot overcome it; it has ſome intereſt in the will, although it have not an intereſt ſufficient; for the will hearkens to it for ſome time, and conſiders of what it offers, notwithſtanding at laſt it rejects its ſuit, and through the ſolicitations of a more powerful Favourite, reſolves againſt it. And this power our luſts have in us whilſt we are *young Converts*, and of a more *imperfect goodneſs*; nay, in ſome very *great temptations* indeed, ſuch as are the *fear of death* and *bodily torments* eſpecially, they will ſtruggle thus in thoſe, who are the moſt *perfect* Chriſtians of all.

But now when our luſts are in this degree, ſo as to ſtay upon our Souls for ſome time, and to ſtrive againſt our ſpirits for the conſent of our wills before they are finally denied it: yet if they go no further than bare luſt, and our wills do not after all their ſtruggling *conſent* to them, or chuſe the evil thing which is craved by them, they are ſtill uncondemning, and incident to an Heir of Salvation. And this, as I take it, is clear from what S. *Paul* himſelf ſays of the truly *regenerate*, or of thoſe, who, in his words, *walk in the ſpirit*. For in them he ſays plainly, that the *fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit*, albeit it is not able to *prevail over* it; ſo that even in doing what the ſpirit commands them, they do againſt the contrary will and luſting of the fleſh which gainſays it. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh; ſo that* even in fulfilling the will of the ſpirit, you contradict another will of your luſts, and *cannot do*, or *b* do not *the things that you would*, Gal. 5. 16, 17. Nay even *Chriſt* himſelf, who knew no ſin, nor ever committed any thing which could in ſtrict juſtice be worthy of death; was yet ſubject to ſuch a conflict of fleſh and ſpirit, as this now mentioned. His very *Death* and *Paſſion*, which was the *very* c *conſummation* and *higheſt part of his obedience*, was not without great ſtruggling of his fleſh, and a long and earneſt conflict of his bodily deſires againſt it. For he was in a *ſtrange fear* and *diſcompoſure* about it; *he began*, ſays St. *Mark*, *to be ſore amazed*, Mark 14. 34. And when he had recovered himſelf a little from the maze of that ſudden fright, he *prays* againſt it — *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*, Mat. 26 39. And when his requeſt was not granted at firſt, he makes a freſh addreſs, wherein he is more *importunate* — *being in his Agony*, ſays S. *Luke*, *he prayed more earneſtly*, Luke 22. 44. *his ſupplications he offered up with ſtrong crying and tears*,

b μὴ ποιῆτε.

c Phil. 2. 8.

tears, Heb. 5. 7. All this ſtrife and oppoſition did the deſire of life, and the bodily appetite after eaſe and ſafety, together with the ſenſe of Gods wrath and high diſpleaſure, raiſe in him againſt this obedience of his ſufferings. But becauſe all this was only luſt and deſire, which although it laſted ſome time, and diſcompoſed him much, was not yet able to gain any thing of his will and *d* conſent to it; (for after all, he ſubmitted himſelf wholly to *Gods* * *will*, to undergo what he ſaw convenient) therefore notwithſtanding it, was he perfectly innocent. All that can be ſaid is, That he was tempted by the deſires of his Fleſh againſt this great and laſt inſtance of obedience; but he did not yield, or conſent to the temptation.

d Matth. 26. 39, 42.
* Matth. 26. 39.

Thus then as for the luſts and deſires of our Fleſh, whether they be ſuddenly rejected and make no reſiſtance, or are longer liv'd and contend much; if they have got no conſent of our wills to the fulfilling of them, nor any choice of the evil which is craved by them, they are only a temptation to a damning ſin, but in themſelves thus far they are not damning.

As for theſe motions & luſtings after evil things then, that are unconſented to and unfulfilled, which are the complaint & fear of good men; they ſhall not harm them, or be charged upon them to their condemnation. But when God comes to judgment, he will pardon and paſs them by, and not eternally puniſh and avenge for them.

And having ſhewn thus *for what luſts and deſires of evil we ſhall at the laſt day be pardoned*; I come now,

2. To ſhew *for which of them we ſhall be condemned.*

And as for this, we have in great part our anſwer to it already. For our *luſts are then damnable and dangerouſly evil, when they are effectual inſtruments and temptations to damning evils, & carry us on either to chuſe, or practiſe them.* For they are the great Favourites and Seducers of our wills,

wills, and thereby the Authors of our actions; they firſt bring us to chuſe and conſent to the deadly ſin whereby they are gratified, and then to act it; and when they are gone on to either of theſe, they are an Article of our condemnation. They are uncondemning till they come ſo far, but if once they have got us to *conſent to the alluring ſin, from that conſent begins their ſting*, and both it, and all that follows it, make us liable to eternal deſtruction.

To make this Diſcourſe more clear, I will here ſet down thoſe *ſeveral ſteps* whereby we aſcend to the completion and are carried on to the working and commiſſion of any ſin.

1. At the *repreſentation* of the object which is to tempt us to it, whether it be an *unchaſt embrace*, an *unlawful gain*, or the like, either by what we *feel of* it now if it be before our *ſenſes*, or by what we *fanſie* if it is in our *imagination*, our *fleſh is pleaſed* and *delighted* with it. And from this *pleaſure* it naturally goes on to *love*, and from *loving* to *deſire* it. And *deſire* or *luſt* is the *laſt ſtep* among the paſſions; for *delight* begets *love*, and *love* ends in *deſire*; but when once we are come to deſire a thing, our paſſions have done their part, and all that in them lyes towards the action.

2. When in the *appetite* or *animal ſoul* the ſin has gone thus far, the next ſtep is, that, to gratifie this deſire or luſt of our Fleſh, our *wills* ſhould *conſent* to it. For our wills are the Diſpoſers of all that follows, ſo that unleſs they conſent to get that which the Fleſh ſo much deſires, there can nothing more be done towards it. But if they do *conſent to the deſire*, and *intend to fulfill it*; then,

3. Our *underſtanding* and *contrivance* is employed in *deliberating* and *conſulting what time, what place, what means* are fitteſt to accompliſh it with the leaſt difficulty,

ty, and the moſt delight, and to the greateſt advantage. And when our minds have ſeen which to prefer and fix upon; then,

4. Our *wills reſolve upon them*, and make *choice of them.* And when this is done, the laſt *Decree is paſt*, and all the time of *doubting* and *deliberation* is over; ſo that nothing more remains, but,

5. To apply our *bodily povers to perform our reſolutions*, in the execution and commiſſion of that which was reſolved upon.

This is the natural order of our faculties, and the proceſs that is obſerved by our principles of action, in their completion and final commiſſion of any ſin. The firſt beginning is in the *lower ſoul*, for that is the inlet of all ſin, and the ſeat of temptation; and there it is that ſin hath all its ſtrength and inſnaring power, upon which account it is called by S. *Paul* a *Law in the Members*, Rom. 7. 23. And when theſe luſts of our Fleſh have won the *conſent of our wills*, they are ſecure of all our after-contrivances for it, and of our actual performance and execution of it. For both our thoughts and our bodily powers are at the Command of our own wills; ſo that if at the inſtigation of our luſts, our wills have once conſented to the ſin, they will quickly ſet our heads awork to contrive for it, and our hands and other bodily powers to execute and fulfil it.

And in this method our Principles of action move, when we act with *full deliberation*, and when they are *all employed.* Sometimes indeed there is no *contrivance* at all, becauſe none is needful; as it happens when the opportunity of the ſin is preſent with us, and juſt before us at ſuch time as we conſent to it; ſo that nothing more is wanting but only to act and fulfil it. But when the opportunity is abſent, and we are put to forecaſt and contrive for it; then is the proceſs of our faculties in

in that very order which I have here deſcribed.

For an inſtance and illuſtration of this, we will take the ſin of *Drunkenneſs*, and the proceſs will appear to be in that order which I have mentioned. For in a man whoſe inclination that way diſpoſes him to be tempted by it, the *fancy* of it in himſelf, or the having it ſuggeſted by another, gives him a *thought* of the *pleaſure* which accompanies it; and from that apprehenſion of its pleaſurableneſs he begins to *love*, and from that loved, he goes on ſtraightway to *deſire* it. And now his *will* being ſollicited by his luſt or bodily deſire, *conſents* to the fulfilling of it. And this conſent being once gained, the next thing in order is to *deliberate* and *contrive what company*, *what time*, and *what place* are fitteſt for it. And when by comparing all things together he comes to make a judgment of that he immediately *chuſes* and *reſolves* upon it; and that being done, there is nothing remaining further but to *execute* what he has reſolved, and go on to the performance of it.

This then is the method and progreſs, from our luſting and deſiring of any thing that is evil, to our acting and committing it. It begins in *delight*, and *love*, and *deſire*; and thence goes on to our *conſenting* to it, to our *contrivance* for it, to our *reſolutions* upon it, and after all theſe, to our *practice* and *performance* of it.

Now ſo long as the evil is entertained only in a *ſhort delightſom thought*, or *love*, or *deſire*, and reſts there, but goes no *further*: it is not ſo much our *damning ſin*, as our *dangerous temptation*; it will be connived at, and at the laſt Day we ſhall not be condemned for it. For thus far the ſin is only ſolliciting our choice, but has not got it; and as yet we have not committed a mortal crime, but are only under a tryal whether we will be drawn to the commiſſion of it, or no. But if once our

our wills *conſent to it*, then begins the ſting, and there the danger enters; for the luſting after evil ſo far as to *conſent* to it, and much more ſo as to *contrive* for it, or to *fulfil* it, makes us liable to death and eternal condemnation. For our *own choice*, as we heard above, *Makes any ſin damning*; ſo that if by means of the tempting luſt any ſin has prevailed ſo far, it is become a deadly offence, and ſubjects us to deſtruction. *Luſt*, ſays S. *James*, *when it has conceived*, or is imperfectly conſented to, anſwering to conception which is an imperfect information, *bringeth forth ſin*; *and ſin*, *when* by being perfectly conſented to, *it is finiſhed*, *bringeth forth death* which is the wages of it, *Jam.* 1. 15.

And that our luſts after any ſin are then damnably ſinful, when they are gone *beyond* deſire, and are come on, either to our *conſent*, or *contrivance*, or actual *performance*; appears further from theſe inſtances in them all *three*.

If we luſt ſo long after any evil thing, as to *conſent to the ſinful enjoyment of it*, we are guilty of all that puniſhment which is threatned to it. *He that looks upon a woman*, ſays our Saviour, ſo long as *to luſt after her*, or to * conſent in his heart to the enjoyment of her, *he hath committed adultery already with her in his heart*, Mat. 5. 28.

* *Juxta Domini noſtri Dictum, Qui Mulierem viderit ad concupiſcendum, reus eſt Adulterii corde concepti: intelligere poſſumus quod etſi res turpes & damnabiles neceſſitate non agimus, pro ipſa tamen rerum turpium voluntate damnamur.* Sal. de Prov. l. 6. p. 205. Ed Oxon. And *Clemens Alexand.* brings this Text to prove that involuntary ſins will never be imputed to us; thereby implying that the Luſt here mentioned had gone on ſo far as to gain the choice and conſent of our heart, becauſe it ſhall. ἃ λογίζονται δὲ καὶ μὴ κατὰ προαίρεσιν συνίσανται· ὁ γὰρ ἐτθυμήσας ἤδη μεμοιχευκε φησίν. Strom. 2. p. 284.

If we luſt ſo long as to *contrive for it*, which is a degree further; we are more guilty of the ſin, and more liable to the puniſhment of it ſtill. The *machinations* and contrivances of *murder*, as was obſerved above, are reckoned among thoſe things which *pollute a man*, (and thereby unfit him for entring into Heaven,

where nothing can ever have admittance that is unclean) as well as *murder* it ſelf is, *Mat.* 15. 19.

But if our luſt after any ſinful enjoyment carry us on, not only to *conſent to it*, or to *contrive for it*, but, what is the perfection of all, to *work* and *fulfil* it: then has it enſnared us into as much miſchief as it can, and is become *dangerous* and *damning* with a witneſs. For then it has prevailed with us to compleat our ſin, and give the laſt hand to it; it has brought us under that which is moſt of all threatned; for now we *fufil the luſts of the fleſh*, Gal. 5. 16, 19. *we work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23.

And if we continue to do this, not only for *once* or *twice*, but in *conſtant returns*, and in a *fixt courſe* and *tenure of action*; then as our *ſin is grown higher*, the acts thereof being more numerous, and the guilt more crying; ſo will our puniſhment alſo be more *dreadfully ſevere*. And this is called *walking after the fleſh*, 2 Pet. 2. 10; and *living after the fleſh*, Rom. 8. 13. And this being a *ſtate of waſted vertue*, and *habitual reigning ſin*; it is not only, through its obnoxiouſneſs to puniſhment, a *ſtate of death*; but alſo, through its hardneſs of cure and difficult recovery, a ſtate of *great doubt* and *danger* likewiſe.

So that as for all theſe *further degrees*, from the *conſent of our wills*, *onwards*; if our luſts after any ſin have gone on to them, they are deadly and damning. For the ſame *Law in the members*, which *wars againſt the law of the mind*, ſo as thus to captivate and triumph over it, is, as the *Law of ſin*, ſo, as the Apoſtle ſays, the *Law of death* too, *Rom.* 7. 23. 25.

All our luſtings after evil therefore, when once they come to be conſented to, although before they were connived at, are thenceforth deadly and damning. So that whoſoever hopes to be ſaved at the laſt Day from the puniſhment of them, muſt thus far mortifie and kill them. *Mortifie*, ſays S. *Paul*, *thoſe deſire which*

are

are ſeated in your earthly members, Col. 3. 5; for it is only *if you through the ſpirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, that you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13. As to theſe *damnable degrees*, all fleſhly luſts muſt of neceſſity be crucified in all *good Chriſtian men*; for no man will be reputed to *belong to Chriſt*, till this change is wrought in him. *They that are Chriſts*, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts*, Gal. 5. 24.

Mortifie and *crucifie* them, I ſay, we muſt; not ſo as to have *no fleſhly appetites*, and *bodily deſires of evil*; for then muſt we have *no bodily deſires at all*. Becauſe our luſts themſelves, as was obſerved, do not diſtinguiſh of *lawful* or *unlawful*, but are naturally moved by an agreeable object, whether it be *with God* or *againſt him*. But we muſt mortifie them to that *degree*, as that they never be *able to win us over to conſent to any forbidden thing for their gratification*. They muſt never have ſo much intereſt in our hearts, as to make us prefer them before our duty, and chuſe to perform what *they* bid us, rather than what *God* doth. Some ſtirrings and *ineffective motions* of them, which cannot prevail againſt God, nor gain over the conſent of our wills to any thing that he has forbidden, are diſpenſed with; they are the ſtage of temptation, but not of death; for God bears with them, and the mortified men themſelves do daily feel and labour under them. But it is the *prevailing ſtrength* of our luſts after evil things, when they get our conſent to them, and carry us on to tranſgreſs Gods Laws to fulfil them: this conquering power of fleſhly luſts, I ſay, it is, which is to be mortified in every good man, becauſe, under this ſtrength and empire of them, he cannot go to Heaven.

And that no *good man* may call in queſtion the ſafety of his ſtate, from any needleſs fears about this *mortification*; this we muſt know every man has done in *his*

converſion to become a good Chriſtian. For before he can be ſuch, he has killed the reigning power of luſt, ſo as not to be acted any longer by its inſtigation. He feels ſome ſmall ſtirrings of it afterwards indeed; but they do not win upon him, or prevail over him; for he is always ready to deny the ſatisfaction of his luſt, before he will diſpleaſe his God; and makes all the deſires of his fleſh to give way to the dictates of his Conſcience. *Ye that are Chriſts,* ſaith S. *Paul, have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts,* Gal. 5. 24.

And when this is *once* done, there is no *great trouble* in it *afterwards*; for the more any man is *accuſtomed to obey,* the leſs difficulty doth he find in *mortification* and *ſelf-denial,* and in reſtraining of all thoſe luſts which tempt to diſobedience. He is not now in every temptation put to the pain and trouble of *cutting off a right hand,* or of *plucking out a right eye*; the ſelf denial and mortification went ſo near him at firſt, 'tis true; but ſince he has been uſed to it, and his fleſh is accuſtomed to bear the yoke and to be under ſubjection, there are no ſuch pangs and uneaſineſs attending it. So that if he is not now ſtill upon the ſevere task of *painful mortification,* it is becauſe he doth not need it, ſince it is done already to his hand. His luſts are ſo far mortified, as it is abſolutely neceſſary they ſhould; they are crucified to that degree, as to be diſabled from gaining his *conſent to them,* his *contrivance for them,* or his *fulfilling* and *performance of them*; and that is as much mortification, as God will exact of him.

But yet when this is done, and our luſts are mortified to this degree, there is *ſtill need of a watchful care over them,* and *of a continual ſtrife againſt them, leſt they ſhould rebel again and go further.* For the objects of ſenſe, and the allurements of our fleſh, are ſtill before us; and our bodies naturally are ſtill as capable to be delighted

delighted in them, and thereupon to luſt and long after them, as ever they were before. It is only the overpowering ſtrength of the Law in the mind or conſcience, which maintains the reſolution of our wills againſt them, and by that means keeps them under. And therefore if once we begin to ſlacken our care, and to keep no hank upon them, but allow them to go where, and how far they pleaſe; they will quickly grow upon us, and prove too hard for us, and bring us firſt to conſent to them, and after that to compleat and fulfil them.

Let no man therefore *indulge to the thoughts of unlawful pleaſures*, and, by the delights of his fancy, foment and cheriſh the luſts and deſires of his Fleſh; preſuming that all is ſafe whilſt he doth not conſent to them, nor yields to fulfil them. For admitting that all things elſe are innocent and uncondemning, yet however by this means he lays a ſnare for his own ſoul, For he throws himſelf into temptation, and ſo cannot expect that God ſhould deliver him out of it. God has promiſed to relieve us indeed in all neceſſities of his own making; if his *Providence throws us upon trial, his Grace ſhall ſupport us under it*, and make a way for our eſcape out of it. *He will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what you are able*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *but, together with the temptation*, he *will make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear* ſo much of *it* as befalls you, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. But what is this to us, if we bring our ſelves into ſnares, and prove our own tempters? For there is no reaſon at all to preſume, that God, if he will deliver us from other enemies, ſhould deliver us alſo from our own ſelves; and that he ſhould ſecure us by his Spirit from thoſe very ſnares, which we lay for our own Vertue. No, if we will entertain Serpents in our boſoms, he has no where engaged, nor is there any reaſon why he ſhould, that we ſhall not be ſtung by them. But

on

on the contrary, he warns us againſt them, and bids us be careful to keep off from them. Yea, ſo far muſt we be from bringing temptations upon our ſelves, that, if we will obſerve his orders, we muſt pray daily even againſt thoſe whereto his Providence might expoſe us. This being one of thoſe Petitions, which, according to our Lords appointment, we are to put up to God as often as we do that for our daily bread; *viz.* That *he would not lead us into temptation*, Matth. 6. 13. So that if by indulging to delightſome fancies, and growing luſts of evil, we throw our ſelves into a great temptation, we have juſt reaſon to fear, that God, for our puniſhment, ſhould leave us in it, and ſuffer us damnably to fall by it. Such indulgence is apt of *it ſelf* to inflame our luſts, and to weaken our reſolutions; and God is alſo prone to withdraw his Grace, and to leave us to our own ſtrength upon it; and ſince at the ſame time it *increaſes our neceſſities*, and *withdraws our aids*, it muſt needs put us into a dangerous condition. If then we would ſecure our ſouls, and keep off from damning ſins; we muſt reſiſt temptations at the beginning, and not give way to them; we muſt not cheriſh and indulge, but timely check, and heedfully ſuppreſs them.

And thus at laſt we ſee what is the juſt force of this firſt cauſe of fear to honeſt minds, their *ineffective luſts* and *impotent deſires of evil*. The *firſt beginnings of luſt cannot be avoided, and the longer entertainment of it ſhall not finally be puniſhed, if it is ſoon checked by us, nay if it ſtays longer and contends much with us, ſo long as it doth not prevail upon us to conſent to and fulfil the ſin whereto it is a temptation* But *when once it has gained our conſent and choice of that ſin, whereto it would engage us, then is it of a damning ſtain, and all its following effects are mortal* All which S. *James* inſinuates to us, in that account which he gives us of the progreſs and production of ſin, which he ſets down from

from the *motive* or *firſt temptation*, to the *perfect birth* or *compleat production*, in this order: *Then*, ſays he, *every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſts, and inticed* to evil by them. This luſt or deſire of evil is only the firſt ſtep, being as yet not grown up to the ſtature of ſin, but only to that of temptation. But when it advances, and draws in our other faculties; then ſin begins and ripens; it is firſt conceived, and then finiſhed; and after the finiſhing of it, it is a matter of condemnation, although before it were uncondemning. For *then when luſt hath conceived*, by being in ſome imperfect meaſure willed and conſented to, *it bringeth forth*, anſwerable to its conception, which is but an imperfect ſort of production, an imperfect embryo of *ſin*; *and* this embryo of *ſin*, *when* by a full choice and perfect conſent, and much more when by action and practice, *it is finiſhed*, *bringeth forth* its proper wages, *death*. Jam 1. 14, 15.

Although theſe luſtings and deſires therefore which good men complain of may juſtly be an imployment of their *watchfulneſs* and *care*; yet ought they not to be a cauſe of their *fear* or *ſcruple*. For it ſhall not bring upon them thoſe evils which they are afraid of, nor ever prove their ruine and deſtruction. The evil thing is entertained only in a thought, or a wiſh; they luſt after it, and are tempted by it; but that is all, for they do not conſent to the temptation. And ſince their luſts go no further than thus, they ſhall not harm them when Chriſt comes to Judgment, nor ever bring them into condemnation.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of two other Cauſes of groundleſs Scruples to good Souls.

The Contents.

A ſecond cauſe of ſcruple is their unaffectedneſs or diſtraction ſometimes in their prayers. Of the Neceſſity of Fixedneſs and Fervency in Devotion when we can, and of Gods readineſs to diſpenſe with them when we cannot enjoy them. Attention diſturbed often whether we will or no. A particular cauſe of it in fervent prayers. Fervency and affection not depending ſo much upon the command of our wills, as upon the temper of our bodies. Fervency is unconſtant in them whoſe temper is fit for it. God meaſures us not by the fixedneſs of our thoughts, or the warmth of our tempers, but by the choice of our wills, and the obedience of our lives. Other qualifications in prayer are ſufficient to have our prayers heard, when theſe are wanting. Yea, thoſe Vertues which make our prayers acceptable, are more eminently ſhown in our obedience, ſo that it would bring down to us the bleſſings of prayer, ſhould it prove in thoſe reſpects defective. A third cauſe of ſcruple is the danger of idle or impertinent words mentioned Matth. 12. 36. *The ſcruple upon this repreſented. The practical errour of a moroſe behaviour incurred upon it. This diſcountenanced by the light of Nature, and by Chriſtanity. The benefits and place of ſerious Diſcourſe. Pleaſurable converſation a great Field of Vertue. The idle words,* Matth. 12. *not every vain and uſeleſs; but falſe, ſlanderous, and reproachful words; this proved from the place.*

Another

ANother thing which diſquiets the hearts of good and honeſt men, and makes them needleſly to call in queſtion the ſaveableneſs of their preſent ſtate, and their title to ſalvation; is the *coldneſs* and *unaffectedneſs*, the *unſettledneſs* and *diſtractions which they find in themſelves when they are at prayers*. Good people are wont to cry out of *deſertions*, to think that God has thrown them off, and that his Spirit has forſaken them, if at any time they find a great diſtraction and dulneſs of Spirit in their devotions, and a great abatement of that zeal and fervency, that fixedneſs and attention, which they have happily enjoyed at other times.

But this is a great miſtake from mens ignorance of *Gods Laws*, and of their *own ſelves*. For God has no where told them that he will judge them at the laſt day by the *ſteadineſs*, and *fixedneſs*, the *tide* and *fervency of their devotions*; but by the *integrity of their hearts*, and the *uprightneſs of their obedience*. The laſt Sentence ſhall not paſs upon men according to the heat of their affections; but according to the goodneſs of their lives. So that if they have been careful to practiſe *all God's Commandments* according to their power and opportunities, and this of *prayer* among the reſt, in ſuch ſort as their unavoidable infirmities would ſuffer them, they ſhall be ſafe in that Judgment, notwithſtanding any inequality in their bodily tempers, or unconſtancy and abatement in their bodily affections.

To ſtate this buſineſs ſo, as that we may neither be *unneceſſarily ſcrupulous* about theſe qualifications of our prayers when we *cannot*, nor, on the other ſide, *irreligiouſly careleſs* of them when we *might* enjoy them; I ſhall ſay ſomething of their *neceſſity* when they can be had, as well as of that *allowance* which God will make to them, when, through any *bodily indiſpoſitions*, or *unforeſeen*

foreſeen accidents, they cannot.

If we would put up our prayers to God in ſuch manner, as it is fit for *us* to offer them in, or for *him* to hear them, we muſt make them with a *due fixedneſs* and *attention of mind*, and *fervency of affection*.

We muſt offer them up with a due *fixedneſs* and *attention of mind*. Our thoughts muſt go along with our lips, and our ſouls muſt be intent upon the buſineſs which we are about, when we are making our prayers to God. We muſt not expect that he ſhould mind thoſe vain words, and mere talk, which we do not; or that he ſhould hear us, when we do not hear our ſelves: No, it is the work of the Soul, and not the bare labour of the lips, which he attends to; ſo that if only our Tongues pray, but our minds are ſtraying, this is as good as no prayer at all.

We muſt offer them up alſo with much *earneſtneſs of deſire*, and *fervency of affection*. We muſt ſhew that we put a price upon a mercy, before we are fit to receive it; for otherwiſe there is no aſſurance that we ſhall be duely thankful for it. We muſt not ſeem cold, and indifferent after it, for that is a ſign that we can almoſt be as well content without it. But we muſt be eager in our deſire, and expreſs a fervency of affection after it; ſuch as we are wont to uſe in the purſuit of any thing which we greatly value: and this is an inducement for God to give us that, which he ſees we ſo dearly love; it ſets a price upon his bleſſings, and ſhews the meaſure of our own vertuous inclinations, and therefore he will encourage and reward it. *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man*, ſays S. *James*, *availeth much*, Jam. 5. 16.

Thus are a due attention of mind, and a fervent heat of deſire in devotion, ſuch qualifications, as are neceſſary to render our prayers becoming, either us to offer,

offer, or God to hear; ſo that we muſt always ſtrive, and according to our *power* and *preſent circumſtances*, endeavour after them. We muſt take care, as much as we can, to *compoſe our thoughts* when we pray, to *draw them off from other things* for ſome time before, and ſtill to *bring them back again* when at any time we find them wandring. And we muſt endeavour alſo by a due ſenſe of the *neceſſity*, the *greatneſs*, and *undeſervedneſs of Gods mercies*, to *heighten our affections*, and make them bend vigorouſly and eagerly after thoſe things which we pray for; that ſo God ſeeing we are *ſerious* and in *earneſt* with him, he may be induced to grant thoſe benefits which we deſire of him.

But then, on the other hand, if after all our care and pains in fixing our thoughts, and raiſing of our deſires, through ſome *bodily indiſpoſition* or *unforeſeen accidents*, which we cannot help, our minds run ſometimes ſtill aſtray, and our deſires are cold and languid; this *unwill'd dulneſs* and *diſtraction ſhall not influence our main ſtate*: it is a thing which we cannot help, and no man living is perfectly free from it, and therefore God will not be ſevere upon it, but in great mercy he will pity and connive at it.

For as for the *attention of our minds*, and the *fixedneſs of our thoughts*, either in prayer, or in any *other* buſineſs; it is a thing which is not always in our own power, but may be hindred and interrupted by many accidents whether we will or no. For any thing that makes our *bodily ſpirits tumultuary* and *reſtleſs*, renders our *attention ſmall* and *interrupted*. Any *high motion of our blood*, any *former impreſſion upon our ſpirits*, either by our *precedent ſtudies*, or our *crowd of buſineſs*, will make great variety of thoughts and roving fancies obtrude themſelves upon us; and this is our natural frame and conſtitution, which we muſt ſubmit to, and

cannot remedy. We can no more prevent it, than we can prevent our *dreams*, but our fancies will be ſtruck, and diverting thoughts will be thrown into us, whether we will or no. For from the *natural union of our ſouls and bodies*, our *minds*, in their moſt *ſpiritual* operations of *thinking* and *underſtanding*, go along with our *bodily ſpirits*, and apprehend after their impreſſions; and we can as well refuſe to *ſee when our eyes are open*, or to *taſte what is put into our mouths*, as we can refuſe to have a *thought of thoſe things, which are impreſſed upon our bodily fancy or imagination*. The connexion betwixt theſe is neceſſary, and natural; and there is no breaking, or avoiding it. So that let us be either at our prayers, or at any other exerciſe, if any temper of our bodies, any accidental motion of our blood, any former impreſſions of foregoing ſtudies, or other buſineſs, ſtir in our fancies; our thoughts muſt needs be diverted, and our attention diſturbed by them. Nay, in our prayers we are more apt to find it thus, than in any other thing. For there men oft-times uſe *violence*, and ſcrew up the fixedneſs of their minds, and the fervency of their hearts, to the higheſt pitch: and then their bodily ſpirits, being overſtrained, are liable, not only to be diſcompoſed by outward accidents, but alſo to give back and fall of themſelves; and when in this manner they withdraw, there is room made, till they can be again recollected, for other thoughts to ariſe inſtead of them. All this, I ſay, happens from the very nature and frame of our bodies, and from that dependence which our minds and thoughts themſelves have upon them; ſo that we cannot prevent or overcome it wholly. We may, and ought indeed to ſtrive againſt theſe diſtractions as much as we can, and to compoſe our thoughts as much as our natural temper, or our preſent circumſtances will

ſuffer

ſuffer us: when they wander in our prayers, as ſoon as we diſcern it we may recollect them; and when other thoughts intrude, as ſoon as they are obſerved we may reject them: but then this is all that we can do, or that God requires we ſhould do; for we cannot pray perfectly, and continuedly without them.

And then as for the *zeal* and *fervency of our affections*, whether in our prayers or in any thing elſe, they are *fickle* and *very changeable*, and do not depend ſo much upon the *choice of our wills*, as upon the *temper of our bodies*. Some upon every occaſion are more *warm* and *eager in their paſſions*, either of *love* or *hatred*, *hopes* or *fears*, *joy* or *ſorrow*, than other men either are, or can be. For there is a difference in *tempers*, as well as in *palates*; and mens *paſſions* do no more iſſue out upon the ſame things, in the ſame eagerneſs; than their *ſtomachs* do after the ſame food, with the ſame degrees of appetite. So that as for a *great fervency* and a *vehement affection*; every man cannot work himſelf up to it, becauſe all tempers do not admit of it. For *zeal* and *affectionateneſs in Devotion*, as in other things, is more a mans *temper* than his *choice*; and therefore it is not to be expected, that all people ſhould be able to raiſe themſelves up to a tranſporting pitch in it; but only that they ſhould, who are born to it.

Nay, even they whoſe *natural temper* fits them for a *great fervency* and a *high affection*, are not able to work themſelves up to it at *all times*. For no mans temper is *conſtant*, and *unchangeable*; ſeeing our very bodies are ſubject to a thouſand alterations, either from *things within*, or from others that are *without us*. If a mans *blood* is put into an *irregular ferment*, either by a *cold air*, or an *inward diſtemper*, or any *diſcompoſing accident*; it ſpoils, not only the fixedneſs of his thoughts, but the zeal of his affections likewiſe. Let there be any

damp

damp or diſorder, any dulneſs or indiſpoſition, either upon a mans blood or ſpirits; and the diſcompoſure of his body is preſently felt in his ſoul, for his thoughts flag, and his paſſions run low, and all his powers are under a cloud, and ſuffer an abatement. And this every man finds in himſelf, when he labours under a *ſickly* and *crazy temper*, an *aking head*, or any other *bodily indiſpoſition*. For our paſſions are bodily powers and are performed altogether by bodily inſtruments; they live and dye with them, and are ſubject to all their coolings and abatements, their changes and alterations. And therefore as long as our bodily tempers and diſpoſitions alter, and, by reaſon of a number of accidents, whether from without or from within themſelves, are ſtill changeable and unconſtant; the zeal and fervency of our affections muſt needs be ſo too.

Thus is ſome diſtraction of mind and chilneſs of affection, either in our prayers, or in purſuit of any other thing, moſt neceſſarily incident to all men. We cannot wholly prevent them, or live altogether free from them; but ſometimes they will break in, and ſeize upon us do what we can.

And ſince we cannot help them, God will not be always angry, or eternally torment us for them. No, he knows that we are *fleſh* and *blood*, and his love and favour to us doth not alter, as our unſetled thoughts, or bodily tempers do. He meaſures us not by the *fixedneſs of our thoughts*, or by the *fervency of our affections*, which are not always in our own power; but by our *wills* and *actions* which are. So that if we are careful to will and chuſe what is pleaſing to him, and from our hearts entirely to obey him; we need not doubt, but that, whatever *involuntary* diſtractions there may be ſometimes in our thoughts, or abatements in our bodily tempers whilſt we are at our prayers, we ſhall ſtill be accepted by him. We

We ſhall be accepted, I ſay, and the bleſſings which we ſue for obtained, although ſometimes our prayers are leſs attent, and leſs affectionate, than at other times they are, and we at all times greatly deſire they might be. For our *fixedneſs* and *fervency* are not the only things which procure acceptance for our prayers. They are *great good things*, as I ſaid, and ſuch qualifications as make our requeſts fit, both *for us to offer*, and *for God to hear*; and therefore we muſt take care ſtill when we pray, in ſuch meaſure as we are able, to be provided with them. But although they are ſome, yet are they not the only qualifications of our prayers, which prevail with God, and move him to hear them. For our *truſt* and *dependance*, our *ſubmiſſion* and *reſignedneſs*, and other *ſpiritual vertues* and inſtances of obedience, are likewiſe diſpoſitions which God reſpects in them; nay indeed which he prizes above all, and principally looks at. So that if we pray with theſe, God is honoured by our prayers, and he will reward them; and our petitions ſhall not be put up in vain, although, by reaſon of ſome bodily dulneſs or diſtraction, the fixt attention of our minds, and the fervency of our hearts, which we endeavour after always, and enjoy at other times, ſhould happen to be wanting.

Yea, I add further, ſo long as our *hearts are honeſt*, and our *lives entirely obedient*, we are *always* furniſhed with thoſe qualifications, which are ſufficient to bring down Gods Grace and Bleſſing upon us, and which are the principal things that make our prayers themſelves an acceptable Offering. A good man is drawing down the bleſſings of Heaven upon himſelf all his life long, and not only whilſt he is upon his knees: ſo that if at any time his prayers are leſs perfect, and chance to falter; that defect will be otherwiſe ſupplied, and he will have all that mercy conveyed to him through another

another means, which his prayers ſhould have obtained for him; ſeeing that which makes his prayers procure Gods love and mercy for him, will make his obedience procure the very ſame.

For I ſuppoſe no man is ſo ſilly as to imagine, that it is the *lifting up of his eyes and hands*, the *compoſedneſs of his countenance*, the *quaintneſs of his phraſe*, the *eloquence of his expreſſions*, the *volubility of his language*, or any other *external thing* which makes his prayers ſo powerful, and brings down the bleſſing of God upon them. But it is that *dependance upon God*, that *confidence in God*, that *love of God* and *deſire of goodneſs*, that *acknowledgment of his tenderneſs and power*, that *ſubmiſſion to his Authority*, and *reſignation to his pleaſure*, which are all *implied in prayer*, and *fitly expreſſed by it*, and which make up the very *life* and *ſpirit* of it: theſe, I ſay, it is which God looks at in our prayers, and for the ſake whereof he ſo graciouſly accepts and rewards them. But now as for all *theſe* they are expreſſed every whit as much by the *obedience of our lives*, as by the *prayer of our lips*; nay indeed *much more*, in as much as our *actions* are a more perfect expreſſion and certain evidence of all theſe tempers of a good heart, than our *words* are. They differ as much as *words* and *deeds*, as *profeſſion* and *performance*; for whereas in our prayers we only ſpeak and profeſs all this, in the obedience of our lives we work and perform it. We ſhew our *love* and *reſignation to God*, when *for his ſake we deny our ſelves*, and *give up our own will in obedience to his*. We *acknowledge his Power* and *Authority* moſt effectually, when we *obey it*; and *owne his Providence* to the beſt purpoſe, when we *contentedly acquieſce in it*, and *patiently ſubmit to it*; and *confeſs his love* and *kindneſs* after the moſt acceptable ſort, wh n we *throw our ſelves upon it*, and *work and endeavour*

endeavour all our lives long in hopes and expectations of it. In our daily *actions* of *Juſtice* and *Charity*, of *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, of *Meekneſs*, *Patience*, *Mercy* and *Forgiveneſs*, and in all other inſtances of obedience, we *give God the honour to chuſe for us*, to *diſpoſe of us*, to *be ſought after and intruſted by us.* We evidence our *eſteem of him*, our *love for him*, our *truſt in him*; our *dependance on him*, our *reſignation to him*; and that moſt effectually. So that whatſoever can move God in our *prayers*, will move him in a higher degree, and after another faſhion in our *obedience*; the Spirit of goodneſs, which is evidenced in our prayers, being evidenc'd much more in the courſe of good actions. No Rhetorick therefore of our Prayers, is like to that of a good life, every action of obedience in a good man having the effect of a prayer, and calling down upon him the ſame mercy and the ſame Grace, which would be procured by a ſupplication.

Let a man therefore make ſure in the firſt place of a *good life*, and of an *honeſt* and *intire obedience*; and then he need not fear to want thoſe things which all good men have need to pray for, ſeeing he will ſhew ſo much daily in his life, as will make his requeſts be granted, and his prayers be hearkened to. He cannot periſh for want of thoſe mercies which he prays for, although it be ſometimes with coldneſs and diſtraction; becauſe not only *the other obedient tempers of his prayers*, when through ſome unchoſen hindrances a due fixedneſs and fervency are wanting, but alſo the *conſtant* and *uninterrupted obedience of his life* is daily aſcending up, and brings them down upon him.

Let no good ſoul therefore be further troubled and diſquieted upon this account, as if, becauſe after all his care his prayers are ſometimes dull and cold, and his thoughts therein are much diſtracted, he ſhould either

be *eternally puniſhed* for them, or at leaſt, *go without thoſe bleſſings* which he deſires in them. For ſo long as the *Spirit of obedience* appears both in his Prayers and in his actions, the *unwilled diſtractions of his mind*, and the *dulneſs* and *frozenneſs of his affections* at ſome times, ſhall be no hindrance either to his *Suit* at preſent, or to his *happineſs* hereafter: his requeſt ſhall not be thrown by, nor he condemned for them; but, ſo far as God ſees it fitting for him, it ſhall be granted, and he ſhall eternally be ſaved notwithſtanding them.

3. A *third* ſcruple, which is wont cauſeleſly to diſquiet and trouble *good* and *honeſt minds*, is the words of our Saviour *Matth.* 12. *I ſay unto you, That* as concerning *every idle word which men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof at the day of Judgement*, ver. 36.

This ſeems to be a *ſtrict* and a *ſevere Saying*. For in all the *crowd* and *variety of converſe*, in the *infinite numbers of Queſtions* and *Anſwers*, and other occaſions of diſcourſe; what man in all the World, but eſpecially of thoſe who are of a *converſation* that is *free* and *open*, *courteous* and *ingenuous*, *cheerful* and *delightſome*, which tempers the Goſpel doth not only *allow*, but *approve* of; who, I ſay, of all men, but of men of this temper eſpecially, among all the occaſions of ſpeech can avoid a *multitude of words*? and where much is ſaid, how can it be but that much muſt be *idle* and *impertinent*?

This is a great ſnare, and to avoid it men run into a great errour. For they are led to place a *great Religion* in *holy talk*, and *religious forms of expreſſion*, which they prize ſo far as to think *their converſation is unhallowed without it*. And if at any time their ſerioufneſs was thrown aſide, and their Diſcourſe, though *innocent*, was *vain* and *uſeleſs*, they are greatly troubled and afraid,

and

and think they are fallen within the limits of damnation.

And this has a very ill effect, for it frights men from all the *innocent freedom of converſe*, and the *cheerful entertainments of company*. It makes them to appear *ſtaid* and *reſerved*, *ſilent* and *moroſe*; to contribute nothing to the harmleſs mirth and cheerfulneſs of converſation themſelves, and to frown upon it in others. For all converſe and ſociety is managed by the *tongue*, and the ordinary entertainment of company is *talking* and *diſcourſe*; but where men think every idle and uſeleſs word ſo dangerous a ſin, they are afraid to ſpeak. So that all that comes from them is *ſtudied* and *deliberate*, *grave*, and *compoſed*; they neither dare uſe any freedom themſelves, nor can without offence allow it to be uſed by others.

But this is ſo far from being *injoined by Chriſt*, that it is *diſcountenanced by nature*; it is ſo far from being a piece of *Religion* and a *holy Duty*, that 'tis rather a piece of *immorality* and *ill manners*. For *Ariſtotle* and other *Philoſophers* of old, have long ago made *urbanity*, or an *innocent freedom and facetiouſneſs in converſation*, a *Vertue*; and have noted this *affected reſervedneſs*, and *unpleaſurable moroſeneſs in Diſcourſe*, with a harſh cenſure. * *Thoſe*, ſays he, *who will neither contribute to the harmleſs mirth of company themſelves, nor bear with it in others, are juſtly to be branded with the reproachful names of clownish and moroſe.*

* οἱ μηδ' εἰσπόντες μηδὲν γελοῖον, τοῖς τε λέγουσι δυσχεραίνοντες, ἄγριοι καὶ σκληροὶ δοκοῦσιν εἶναι. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 4. c. 8.

And as it was diſcountenanced by the *light of nature*, ſo is it alſo by the *Laws of Chriſt*. For whatſoever ſome men may think of it, or how innocently ſoever they may be miſled into that conceit about it; yet is it a temper which Chriſt never intended to plant amongſt

us. For his coming into the world was after another way, in a *free uſe of the innocent allowances, and liberties of mankind. The Son of man*, ſays St. *Matthew*, *came eating and drinking*, *i.e.* not in the ſingular Auſterities of *John* the *Baptiſt*, but in a free way of converſation, ſuch as others uſed, *Mat.* 11.19. And his Religion injoins the vertues of *candor* and *benignity*, *affability* and *courteſie*, an *open freedom* and *alacrity*, and all thoſe other ways whereby our converſation may be rendred innocently agreeable, and whereby we may in any wiſe benefit, whether by *profiting*, or *pleaſing* one another. *Whatſoever things*, ſays St. *Paul*, *are* * *lovely* or grateful to men, *think on theſe things*, Phil. 4.8. *Love* is the *Epitome of our whole Duty*, and all the *ſweetners* and *endearments of Society* that can be, ſo long as they are *lawful* and *honeſt*, are not only *conſiſtent* with it, but *parts* and *expreſſions* of it.

* περιφιλῆ.

As for the *grave entertainments of diſcourſe* and *religious conference*; they, without doubt have a *great uſe*, and in their place may deſerve a great commendation. For *good Chriſtians may be much better'd and improved*, by having their *Graces awakned*, their *pious affections inflamed*, their *holy purpoſes fixt and ſetled*, their *endeavours directed and encouraged*, and *every thing that is good in them quickned and confirmed by them.* And therefore this St. *Paul* injoins, not always indeed, but as there is occaſion for it. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but*, inſtead of that, † *if there be any which is good to the uſe of edifying*, [or rather, *if there be any which is good to the* * *edification of want or*

† εἴ τις ἀγαθός.

* πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν χρείας, not χρείαν οἰκοδομῆς, which, if χρεία be taken for *need*, as it is in the Verſe before, [— *that he*

may give to him that needeth, χρείαν ἔχοντι] and we would render it *literally* and *properly* without calling in the *figure hypallage*, ſhould be tranſlated *for the edification of want* or *opportunity*. And ſo S. *Jerome*, *Eraſmus*, and *Arias Montanus* render it. Ἀλλ' εἴ τις ἀγαθὸς, &c. *Sed ſi quis bonus ad ædificationem uſus, ut det gratiam audientibus: Arias Mont. Verſ. interlin. Sed ſi quis bonus ad ædificationem oportunitatis, ut det gratiam audientibus: Verſ.* S. Hieron. *Ad ædificationem fidei, τῆς χρείας, i. e. utilitatis ergo non fidei.* Eraſmus Annot. in loc.

oppor-

opportunity, *i. e.* to edification when it is wanted, and when there is a fit time and occaſion for it,] let that procede from you, *that it may miniſter grace unto the hearers*, Eph. 4. 29. But then 'tis to be conſidered, that even good things themſelves muſt be taken in their *own ſeaſon*, and muſt not be ſuffered to ingroſs all our time, a great part whereof is to be ſpent upon other things. For we have not only one thing to do, but at ſeveral times ſundry things call for us. *There is a time*, ſays *Solomon*, *to every thing, and a ſeaſon to every purpoſe under Heaven: there is a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance*, Eccleſ. 3. 1, 4. There is a time for diverſion, as well as a time for buſineſs; a time wherein to have a more liberal and free diſcourſe, as well as a time for godly and religious conference.

Nay, the *innocent delights of converſation* and pleaſurable entertainments of diſcourſe, are themſelves a great *field of vertue*, and an *exerciſe* and *occaſion* of *many inſtances of obedience*. For in them we may every one of us exerciſe in our *own perſons*, and be *examples unto others*, of much *courteſie* and *kindneſs*, *civility* and *condeſcenſion*, *affability* and *obligingneſs*. Let no man think then that his hours of common converſe are loſt hours, and that whatſoever time he ſpends upon *offices of civility*, and *freedom of company*, is miſplaced, and ſtolen from God and Religion. For we are fulfilling Gods Laws, and doing his work, whilſt we keep all theſe Commandments in the pleaſurable entertainments of common life; they are ſuch buſineſs as he has ſet us, and our obedient performance of them is no leſs his ſervice, than *Devotion*, *holy Conference*, and *Meditation*.

Indeed, if we give way to the pleaſantneſs of Diſcourſe, till it begets in us a *lightneſs of Spirit*, and ſhakes of in

in great part, that *ſeriouſneſs of temper*, and *Conſiderateneſs of mind*, which is neceſſary to keep up an awful apprehenſion of God, and a ſenſe of Religion vigorous in us, and ready on all occaſions: tho thereby we exerciſe ſome vertues, yet are we in the ready way to tranſgreſs more, and ſo are far from being gainers by it. For altho', this doth not expoſe us, it may be, to fall off from an intire obedience, which ſets us in a *ſafe ſtate*, ſo that our acceptance with God, albeit it may ſometimes, is not always endangered by it: yet by weakning that habitual warineſs, and ſerious frame of mind, which is neceſſary to a more *perfect ſtate*, and to guard us againſt *leſſer faults*, and *culpable indecencies*, it will be an *hindrance to Religion*, and keep us from being ſo good, as otherwiſe we ſhould. But ſo long as our *innocent* and *inoffenſive pleaſantneſs* in converſation, is made to comport with an habitual and ſtrict ſeriouſneſs of mind, ſo as it doth not render our Spirits light and frolickſom, vain, or extravagant; it neither hazards the ſafety of our ſtate, nor the encreaſe of our vertue; it is an exerciſe of many inſtances of obedience, and an hindrance to none at all.

So long therefore as we contain our ſelves within a due compaſs, it is not only *no hazard to our main ſtate*, but *no Prejudice or hindrance to Religion*, to be free and open in converſation, and pleaſurable and chearful in common life; but rather an inſtance and expreſſion of it. It is no part of any mans duty to be talking always in *Scripture phraſe*, and *ſanctified expreſſion*, or elſe to be *wholly ſilent*, and *ſeverely moroſe*, and not to talk at all. For an innocent chearfulneſs, and freedom of diſcourſe, whilſt it is guided by diſcretion, and kept within theſe bounds, is not ſo truly the good mans ſnare, or his ſin, as the exerciſe of his vertue and obedience.

But

But as for that opinion, that *every idle and impertinent word ſhall be ſeverely accounted for at the Day of Judgment*, which is the great ſourer of converſation, and the occaſion of this conceit; it is a great miſtake. For it is not every *idle* and *unprofitable* but every *falſe*, *ſlanderous*, or otherwiſe *ſinful* and *unlawful word*, whereof our Saviour ſpeaks, when in the 12*th* of St. *Matthew* he tells us, that *every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.*

As for the word which we tranſlate * *idle*, it may ſignifie *falſe* and *deceitful*; as thoſe words are which *belie our* † *works*, when our actions do not anſwer them. And this is agreeable to the uſe of the word * *vain*, which ſometimes ſignifies the ſame that *falſe* or *lying*. In which ſenſe it is uſed in the *third* Commandment, where we are bid *not to take the name of the Lord in vain*, *i. e.* in *perjury* or *falſhood*. For that ſenſe our Saviour gives to it in his repetition of the Commandments, *Mat.* 5. *It hath been ſaid to them of old*, ſaith he in the *third* Commandment, *thou ſhalt not forſwear thy ſelf* or ſwear falſly, v. 33.

* ἀργὸν ῥῆμα.

† ἔργα.

* μάταιον.

But if nothing more than *uſeleſs* and *unprofitable* were noted by the *word it ſelf*, which we tranſlate *idle*, yet is it no unuſual thing in the Scriptures by ſeveral words *to mean and intend more, than in their literal ſenſe they do expreſs.* Thus are the *abominable works of darkneſs* mentioned *Eph.* 5. called † *unfruitful works*; where the meaning ſurely is, not only that they bring in no profit or advantage, but alſo that they are moſt deadly and miſchievous, v. 11: and the *wicked ſervant*, ſpoken of *Mat.* 25. is called the * *unprofitable ſervant*, v. 30. And after the ſame uſe of ſpeech, our words, which do not only tend to none, but to very ill fruit, may be called † *idle* or *unprofitable words.*

† ἄκαρπα ἔργα.

* ἀχρεῖος δοῦλος.

† ἀργὰ or ἀνωφελῆ ῥήματα.

And ſo they are in this place. For the idle words where-

whereof our Saviour ſpeaks, v. 36; are ſuch words as are not only *idle* and *unprofitable*, but poſitively *wicked* and *evil*; being indeed *falſe*, *ſlanderous*, and *reviling* words; as will appear from the conſideration of theſe particulars.

For the words which are threatned in that 36. ver. are ſuch as are a ſign, not of a *trifling*, but of an *evil heart*. *How can ye*, ſays he, *being evil, ſpeak good things; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* So that *as a good man out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth*, or ſpeaketh *good things*; *an evil man likewiſe, out of the evil treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things*, v. 34, 35.

And being the fruits of an evil heart, they are the ſigns, not of an *impertinent*, but of an *evil man*. *The tree is corrupt*, ſays he, *if the fruit be corrupt; for the tree is known by its fruits*, v. 33.

And ſince they are ſuch words as are thus *ſinful in themſelves*, and an argument of ſo *much ſin in us*; they ſhall in the laſt Judgment be charged upon us to condemn us. *For by thy words*, ſays he, as well as actions, *thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words*, if they be ſuch idle words as I mean, *thou ſhalt be condemned*, v. 37.

The words then which are ſpoken of in this place from the 33. to the 38. ver. are ſuch as are a *ſign of a wicked heart*, as *make a wicked man*, and *render us in the laſt Judgment liable to condemnation*.

But now words of this black dye and of theſe miſchievous effects, are not every *idle* and *impertinent*; but *falſe*, *ſlanderous*, *railing*, or otherwiſe *ſinful* and *forbidden words*. But *falſe* and *ſlanderous* words are eſpecially ſtruck at in this place, ſuch as were thoſe *lying* and *contumelious* ones that occaſioned all this diſcourſe, when the *Jews moſt reproachfully charged his Miracles upon the Devil*, telling him that *he caſt out Devils*

through

through Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils, v. 24. Upon occaſion of which black calumny, he proceeds in all the following verſes, to warn them againſt ſuch *blaſphemous ſpeeches*; demonſtrating clearly the *unreaſonableneſs of them*, v. 25, to 31; the *ſinfulneſs of them*, ver. 33, 34, 35; and the *miſchievous effects* of them in the *two* next verſes. Such reproachful words as theſe let me tell you, ſays he, you ſhall be called to an account for, as well as for your works and actions. *I ſay unto you*, and you may believe me, for you will find it true, that *every idle*, or ſlanderous and reproachful *word*, ſuch as now you have ſpoken againſt me, *that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of judgment. For* when that day comes, think you of it as you pleaſe now, mens words as well as their actions ſhall be called to an account: *by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and*, if they have been ſuch as yours now are, *by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*, v. 36, 37.

And thus by all this it appears, that the *idle word* here threatned by our Lord, is not every word that is *vain* and *uſeleſs*, but only ſuch as are *railing*, *falſe*, or *ſlanderous*. And in this ſenſe ſome Manuſcripts read the place. For in the Book of *Steph.* it is not *every idle*, but † *every wicked word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of judgment.*

† πᾶν ῥῆμα πονηρὸν ὃ ἐὰν λαλήσωσιν, &c.

So that as for this third ſcruple, it is as groundleſs as was the former; no good man need to be diſquieted by it, ſince they ſhall never be condemned for it.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which is a fourth cauſe of ſcruple.

The CONTENTS.

Some good mens fear upon this account. What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghoſt. Holy Ghoſt or Spirit is taken for the gifts or effects of it; whether they be firſt ordinary, either in our minds and underſtandings, or in our wills and tempers; or ſecondly, extraordinary and miraculous. Extraordinary gifts of all ſorts proceed from one and the ſame Spirit or Holy Ghoſt; upon which account any of them indifferently are ſometimes called Spirit, ſometimes Holy Ghoſt. Holy Ghoſt and Spirit are frequently diſtinguiſhed, and then by Holy Ghoſt is meant extraordinary gifts reſpecting the underſtanding; by Spirit extraordinary gifts reſpecting the executive powers. The ſumm of this Explication of the Holy Ghoſt. What ſin againſt it is unpardonable. To ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is to diſhonour him. This is done in every act of ſin, but theſe are not unpardonable. What the unpardonable ſin is. Of ſin againſt the ordinary endowments of the Holy Ghoſt, whether of mind or will; the ſeveral degrees in this, all of them are pardonable. Of ſin againſt the Spirit. Blaſpheming of this comes very near it, and was the ſin of the Phariſees, Matth. 12; *but it was pardonable. Of ſinning againſt the Holy Ghoſt. The Holy Ghoſt the laſt means of reducing men to believe the Goſpel, that Covenant of Repentance. The ſin againſt it is unpardonable,*

nable, becauſe ſuch ſinners are irreclamable. All diſhonour of this is not unpardonable; for Simon Magus *diſhonoured it in actions, who was yet capable of pardon; but only a blaſpheming of it in words. No man is guilty of it whilſt he continues Chriſtian.*

ANother cauſleſs ground of fear, which diſquiets the minds, and affrights the hearts of good Chriſtian people, is the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.* They hear very dreadful things ſpoken of it, for our *Saviour Chriſt,* who knew it beſt, and who at the laſt Day is to judge of it, has told us plainly before-hand, that *he who blaſphemeth the Holy Ghoſt ſhall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come,* Mat. 12. 32; or, as S. *Mark* expreſſes it, *he ſhall never have forgiveneſs, but is liable to eternal damnation,* Mark 3. 29. This is a fearful Sentence upon a deſperate ſin; and ſeeing they are in darkneſs about it, and do not well underſtand it, they know not but that they themſelves *may* be guilty of it; nay, ſome of a *timorous temper* and *abuſed minds* go further, and think that they really *are.*

But to cure their fears, and to quiet their minds in this matter, there needs nothing more be done, than to give them right apprehenſions, and a clear explication of this ſin; for if they once knew what it is, they would be at eaſe from ſuch tormenting ſuſpicions, and unreaſonable fears about it.

To explain this I will conſider,

1. *What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghoſt.*
2. *What is meant here by ſinning againſt it.*

1. *What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghoſt.* By the word, *Holy Ghoſt* or *holy Spirit,* according to an uſual *Metonymie of the giver for the gift,* or of the *cauſe for the effect,* is very often meant *the gifts or effects of the holy Spirit,* whether they be ſuch as he *ordinarily*

produces in us, or ſuch as are *extraordinary* and *miraculous*.

Sometimes it ſignifies ſuch *gifts and diſpoſitions*, whether of *mind* or *temper*, as *the Holy Ghoſt* or *Spirit of God, is wont ordinarily to produce in men*. It notes, I ſay, the good qualifications of our *minds* or *underſtandings*, which, as all other good gifts, are wrought in us by the Spirit, and derived to us from God. Thus a *man endued with wiſdom and diſcretion*, ſuch as *Joſeph* adviſed *Pharaoh* to *ſet over all the Land of Egypt*, is called *a man in whom the Spirit of God is*, Gen. 41. 33, 38; and the *Spirit of the Lord* mentioned *Iſai.* 11, is, in the very next words, explained by *the Spirit of wiſdom, the Spirit of underſtanding, the Spirit of counſel, the Spirit of knowledge, and the Spirit of quick underſtanding*, verſ. 2, 3. It ſignifies alſo the *virtuous tempers* and *good qualifications* of our *hearts*, which, like as the former were, are given us of God. Thus that *good* and *charitable temper* which is ſo exemplary in God, and which is wrought in our ſouls by him, is called *the Spirit of God*, 1 Joh. 4.

* 1 Joh. 3. 24. *If we love one another, God dwells in us*; ſo that * *hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, becauſe he hath given us* that loving temper *of his Spirit*, ver. 12, 13. The *temper* which was ſo obſervable in *Chriſt* is called *the Spirit of Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 9; the *temper of Elias* is called *the Spirit of Elias*, Luke 1. 17; the *Spirit of the Lord* is explained by the *Spirit of the fear of the Lord*, Iſai. 11. 2; and that *ſpirit which God hath given us*, ſays St. *Paul, is not the ſpirit of fear, but the ſpirit of power, of love, and of a ſound mind*, 2 Tim. 1. 7.

Thus doth the *Spirit of God* ſignifie many times in Scripture thoſe *ordinary gifts and Graces, which are the good effects of the Spirit*.

But beſides theſe effects of it in the good endowments and perfections of our natural faculties, whether of

of mind or temper, which are *common* and *ordinary*; ſometimes it ſignifies more eſpecially thoſe gifts, which are *extraordinary* and *miraculous*. Of which ſort are the *gift of tongues*, of *prophecy*, of *healing Diſeaſes without any natural means*, and performing other *miraculous operations*, ſo famous in the firſt times of the Goſpel. Thus, for example, that Saying, *I will pour out in thoſe days of my Spirit*, is interpreted by this in the next words, *And they ſhall propheſie*, Acts 2. 18. And the *elder Brothers*, which was a *double ſhare* of the *prophetick power of Elias*, is called a *double portion of his Spirit*, 2 Kin. 2. 9. And the *Corinthians zealous purſuit*, of the miraculous and extraordinary gifts of *prophecy*, *ſpeaking with tongues*, *healing diſeaſes*, and *working miracles*; is called by the Apoſtle their being * *zealous of Spirits*, or, as we tranſlate it, of *ſpiritual gifts*, 1 Cor. 14. 12. * ζηλωταὶ πνευμάτων.

Now as for theſe extraordinary gifts, they are all wrought in us by the ſame cauſe, and proceed from the ſame Principle, *viz.* the *holy Spirit of God*, or the *holy Ghoſt*. *There are* in the Church now in our times, ſaith the Apoſtle, *diverſities of gifts*, *but* yet *one and the ſame Spirit* is the Donor of them all. *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wiſdom*, or of Goſpel truths and revelations; *to another the word of knowledge*, or diſcerning of remote things, and prophetical predictions, *by the ſame Spirit*; *to another faith*, of his being Divinely aſſiſted to produce ſupernatural effects; *to another* miraculous *gifts of healing* Diſeaſes without uſe of means, *by the ſame Spirit*; *to another the working of miracles*, or the + utmoſt activity and energy of powers in the higheſt inſtances and effects of them, of which ſort are raiſing the Dead, caſting out Devils, inflicting bodily torments on contumacious Sinners, *&c.* *to another prophecy*, or expoſition of Scripture and inſpired Hymns; *to another diſcerning of Spirits*, both in ſeeing + ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων.

ing into mens ſpiritual thoughts and intentions, and alſo in diſcerning who wrought true Miracles, and who Satanical Deluſions, who were divinely inſpired, and who were mere Pretenders; *to another the* ecſtatick *gift* of ſpeaking *divers kinds of tongues* in ſuch rapturous tranſports, as permitted them not to ſtay to interpret what they ſaid, and made them afterwards forget it; *to another the gift of interpreting*, into the vulgar language of any in the Congregation, thoſe ſtrange *tongues*. *But all theſe* diverſities of gifts, *worketh that one, and the ſelf ſame Spirit, dividing* all theſe different gifts *to every man ſeverally as he will*, 1 Cor. 12 4,8,9,10,11. And ſeeing it is the ſame *Spirit* or *Holy Ghoſt*, which is the *Authour* and *Giver* of them all; therefore are they all indifferently called by either name. For ſometimes all theſe extraordinary gifts, both the *power of miracles*, and the *gift of tongues and prophecy*, are called *the Spirit*. Thus when the Apoſtles began to *ſpeak with tongues*, and to *propheſie*, as well as to *work miracles* and *heal diſeaſes*, it is ſaid that *the Spirit was poured out upon them*, Acts 2. 17,18,19; and all theſe varieties of gifts of one ſort or other, which are reckoned up by St. *Paul* in this twelfth Chapter to the *Corinthians*, are attributed to the *Spirit*, and ſaid to be *wrought by it*; and the Apoſtles being *filled with the Holy Ghoſt*, and *ſpeaking with tongues*, is called their *ſpeaking by the ſpirit*, ——*they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt*, ſays St. *Luke*, *and began to ſpeak as the Spirit gave them utterance*, Acts 2. 4. And in like manner at other times, all theſe ſame powers, whether of *underſtanding* or *action*, of *tongues* or *miracles*, are called the *Holy Ghoſt*. Thus the Diſciples being fill'd with *ſupernatural courage*, and *ſpeaking the word*, after the Sanhedrim *had ſtraitly threatned them*, unleſs they would forbear it, *with* extraordinary *boldneſs*, is call'd their being *fill'd with the Holy Ghoſt*, Act. 4. 31,8. And the

the gifts of *ſigns* and *wonders*, and *divers miracles*, are reckoned among the *gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, Heb. 2; *God* ſays St. *Paul*, *bearing the Apoſtles witneſs, with ſigns, and wonders, and divers miracles, and* other *gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, ver. 4. And the *ſigns* and *wonders* which were done by the *hands of the Apoſtles*, particularly that of *healing the lame man*, ſo much taken notice of *Acts* 3; is ſaid to be *the witneſs of the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts 5.12,32.

Thus, I ſay, by reaſon that all theſe *extraordinary gifts*, whether relating to our *minds*, in *knowledge* and *ſpeaking with tongues*, or to our *executive powers*, in *healing diſeaſes*, and *working miracles*, proceed all from the ſelf ſame *Holy Ghoſt* or *Holy Spirit*; the gifts of either ſort are called indifferently by either name, being ſometimes called the *Spirit*, and ſometimes the *Holy Ghoſt*.

But although as I ſay, for this reaſon the words *Spirit* and *Holy Ghoſt* are ſometimes uſed *promiſcuouſly*, to ſignifie *all*, or *any* of theſe extraordinary gifts *indifferently*; yet, what is very material to our purpoſe, ſometimes, nay, very frequently, they are * *diſtinguiſhed*. And then by the *Holy Ghoſt* is meant not *all extraordinary gifts indifferently*, but particularly thoſe which reſpect our *underſtandings*, not *executive powers*, conſiſting rather in *illumination*, than in *power* and *action*; of which ſort are the *gift of tongues*, of *prophecy*, of *diſcerning Spirits*, of *revelation*, and ſuch like. Thus the lying againſt *that part* of the *gift of diſcerning Spirits*, which conſiſted in underſtanding the *thoughts and purpoſes of the heart*, is called *lying to the Holy Ghoſt*. For ſo Saint *Peter*, who was endowed with this gift, tells *Ananias*, when he would have impoſed upon him; *Why hath Satan filled thine heart*, ſaith he, *to lye to the Holy Ghoſt?* Acts 5. 3. And St. *Stephen*'s being filled with an extraordinary *revelation of Chriſt's ſitting at God's right hand* in Heaven, is called *his being filled with the Holy Ghoſt*,

* See the excellent Dr. *Patrick*'s Witneſs to Chriſt. part 1. chap. 1.

Ghoſt, Acts 7. 55. And ſo is *Elizabeths* being *inſpired with a Divine hymn*, Luk. 1. 41. But more eſpecially the *gift of Tongues*, and *Prophecy* is dignified with that name. Thus in the 10*th* Chapter of the *Acts*, when the *Gentiles* in *Cornelius*'s houſe begun to *ſpeak with Tongues* upon St. *Peters* preaching; it is ſaid, that *the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them that heard the word*, and that *on the Gentiles was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghoſt*, v. 44, 45, 46. The Diſciples at *Epheſus*, who being baptized with the *Baptiſm of John*, cannot be ſuppoſed ignorant of the many miraculous Cures ſo much talked of among the *Jews*, and of the ſtrange effects of the Spirit in Jeſus whom *John* preached; did yet tell *Paul*, that *they had not ſo much as heard of the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts 19. 2; which might very well be, becauſe the *Holy Ghoſt*, or *gift of Tongues* and *Prophecy*, were *not given*, the firſt not at all, and the latter not to any but Chriſt himſelf, *till after Jeſus was glorified*, Joh. 7. 39. But upon the preaching of St. *Paul* they were made partakers of it, for *when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghoſt came upon them, and they ſpake with tongues, and propheſied*, Acts 19. 6. And to name no more inſtances in this matter, that place which I now hinted in the 7*th* Chapter of S. *John*, is a full proof of this reſtrained acceptation. For there, after all the inſtances of *curing diſeaſes, caſting out Devils*, and other effects of the *Spirit* in miraculous operations, which Chriſt ſhewed whereſoever he came, and which he empowered his *twelve Apoſtles* to ſhow, *Luke* 9. 1. and the *ſeventy Diſciples*, who after that were ſent out by him, *Luke* 10. 1, 9; it is yet expreſly affirmed, that *the Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified* by his Exaltation to the right hand of God, v. 39. The *Holy Ghoſt*, *i. e.* theſe *gifts of Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, and the like, which are all that remained ſtill

to

to be ſhed abroad, and which came upon the *Apoſtles*, at the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt at *Pentecoſt*, Act. 2.

Thus is the *Holy Ghoſt* ſet to denote, not all the miraculous and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit promiſcuouſly, but particularly thoſe which reſpect the *mind* or *underſtanding*; ſuch as the gift of *Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, of *Revelation*, and the like.

And on the other ſide, as for the word *Spirit*, it is ſet to expreſs, not *all extraordinary gifts* and *effects* of the *Spirit in general*, but thoſe by name which *reſpect our executive, not knowing powers*, and which conſiſt, not in *illumination*, but in *action*. Of which ſort are the *gift of healing diſeaſes*, of *caſting out Devils*, of *raiſing the dead*, and other *miraculous operations*. Thus the *miraculous courage* and *valour* which was given to *Othoniel*, is called the *Spirit of the Lord*, Judg. 3. 10; as is that likewiſe which was given to *Gideon*, Judg. 6. 34; and the *miraculous ſtrength of Samſon*, is called the *Spirit of the Lord upon Samſon*, Judg. 14. 6. And upon Chriſts working the *miraculous cure* upon the *man with the withered hand*, St. *Matthew* applies to him that ſaying of the Prophet, *the Spirit of the Lord came upon him*, Mat. 12. 88; and his *caſting out Devils* he himſelf attributes to the *Spirit* of God, *I*, ſays he, *by the ſpirit of God caſt out Devils*, v. 28.

As by the *Holy Ghoſt* therefore are meant particularly the gifts of *illumination* in *Tongues* and *Prophecy*; ſo by the *Spirit* are ſignified the *gifts of Power* in *healing diſeaſes, caſting out Devils*, and *doing mighty and miraculous works*.

And both theſe together take up the full compaſs of the *extraordinary gifts of the Spirit*, and are both diſtinctly expreſſed by St. *Peter*, when he ſays, that *Jeſus was anointed with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Power*, Act. 10. 38.

Theſe then are the ſeveral meanings of the words,

Holy Ghoſt, and *holy Spirit*. They denote, as the *third Perſon in the Trinity*, the *Holy Ghoſt himſelf*; ſo alſo thoſe *gifts* and *effects* which proceed from him. Whether thoſe gifts are *ordinary*, either in the *endowments of our minds*, or the *vertuous tempers* and *diſpoſitions of our wills and hearts*; or *extraordinary* and *miraculous*. Wherein yet we muſt obſerve this difference, that the gifts of the *executive powers* in *healing diſeaſes*, *caſting out Devils*, *working Miracles*, are by a peculiar name called the *Spirit*; and the gifts of the *knowing* or *underſtanding Faculties*, in *Prophecies*, *Revelations*, *ſpeaking with divers ſorts of Tongues*, are by a contradiſtinct name called the *Holy Ghoſt*.

And thus having ſhewn what is meant by the *Holy Ghoſt*, I proceed now to ſhow,

2. *What is meant by ſinning againſt it*; and *which of all thoſe*, *which are committed againſt it*, *is the unpardonable ſin*.

The only way whereby any men are capable to ſin againſt God, as was obſerved, is by *affront* and *diſhonour*; for God is out of our reach for any other ſort of injury, and we cannot otherwiſe hurt him, than by ſhewing our contempt and diſreſpect of him.

And in regard the *Holy Ghoſt* in his own perſon is *very and eſſential God*, this muſt needs be the only way whereby we can ſin againſt him likewiſe We cannot injure him in his *Nature*, but only in his *Honour*; but then we ſin againſt him, when we *walk croſs to him*, and *oppoſe him*, or any way *ſlight* and *contemn*, *undervalue* or *reproach* him; or any of thoſe excellent and Divine gifts which proceed from him.

Now this we do more or leſs in *every ſin*. For this *Spirit* of God is an *univerſal inſtrument of faith and good life*; it has taken the utmoſt care by *miracles*, and other *its convictive evidences to evince the truth* of Chriſts Do-

ctrin;

ctrine; and doth now ſtill, by his *daily ſuggeſtions* and *ſollicitations*, excite men to the *obſervance* of it. And ſeeing the Spirit of God has ſhown it ſelf ſo much concerned for our *faith*, and *obedience*; every *act* of *unbelief*, and *diſobedience*, is a direct oppoſition to it, and reproach of it, and therefore is a ſin againſt it.

But every ſuch ſin is not the *unpardonable fault* here mentioned. For our very *wilful ſins themſelves*, as has been ſhewn, *are not deſperate under Chriſts Religion*, the Goſpel being a Covenant, that doth not damn men upon all voluntary ſin, but encourages their repentance with the promiſe of pardon; ſo that although all our ſins are againſt God and his Spirit, they are not *irremiſſiable*, but will be remitted to every man who repents of them.

It is not every ſin againſt the Spirit of God then, which this place in S. *Matthew* threatens ſo ſeverely. But the *unpardonable ſin* is a ſin by it ſelf; it has ſomething peculiar in it from all other ſins, which by ſhutting us out from all poſſibility of repentance, excludes it from all hopes of being forgiven.

And indeed it is plainly this. *It is a ſinning againſt the Holy Ghoſt in the laſt ſenſe, as it ſignifies, not only the power of miracles, but alſo the gift of tongues, and other illuminations of the Holy Ghoſt, which came down upon the Apoſtles at* Pentecoſt; *and it is ſuch a ſinning againſt theſe, as is particularly by reviling and blaſpheming them.* This, and none other, I take to be the ſin here mentioned.

For the clearer diſcerning whereof, we will conſider the ſins againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* in all the acceptations before laid down; and in all of them, except the laſt, we ſhall find room for *pardon* and *remiſſion*.

Firſt then, to ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, as it ſignifies the *ordinary endowments, and vertuous tempers of our minds and wills, is not the unpardonable ſin* that is here ſpoken

of. For every ſin againſt any *particular virtue*, is a ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt in that ſenſe. Every act of *drunkenneſs*, for inſtance, is againſt the gift of *ſobriety*; and every act of *uncleanneſs*, is againſt the gift of *continency*; and ſo it is in the ſeveral actions of all other ſorts of ſin. But now as for all theſe, the great offer and invitation of the Goſpel is, that men would accept of mercy upon repentance. The *Inceſtuous Corinthian* ſinned deeply againſt the grace of *chaſtity*, and he *repented*, and was *forgiven*; S. *Peter denied his Lord*, and upon his repentance he was alſo pardoned; and the ſame Grace has been allowed, as we have ſeen, to all other wilful ſinners.

Nay in this ſort of ſinning againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, *viz.* by *ſinning againſt thoſe Chriſtian gifts and graces which he works in us*, there is mercy to *very great degrees*. For ſometimes we do not hearken to his holy motions, but fall into *leſſer ſins* and *offenſive indecencies*, notwithſtanding all his virtuous ſuggeſtions and endeavours to the contrary: and then he is troubled and *grieved* at us, *Eph.* 4. 30. And at other times we venture upon *more hainous crimes*, which quite lay waſte the conſcience, and undo all the vertuous temper and reſolution of our ſouls, ſo that we lie long in our impenitence, as *David* did in the matter of *Uriah*, and are almoſt hardned in our wicked way, before we are able again to recover out of it: and in theſe offences the Spirit has been ſo much affronted, and his importunate ſuggeſtions ſo frequently thrown out, that he is almoſt ready to *forſake us*, and to *leave us to our ſelves*, ſo that it may be called *a quenching of him*, which tho' it be meant of the *miraculous gifts*, alluding to their coming down in the † *form of fire* on the Apoſtles, is true of theſe ordinary ſuggeſtions, & ſaving Graces alſo, 1 Theſſ. 5. 19. But although the laſt of theſe eſpecially be very *dangerous*; yet is neither of them *deſperate*. But after we have been

† Acts 2.

been guilty of them, God continues ſtill to make offers and invitations, and by his *long-ſuffrance*, and his *gracious providences*, and the *repeated calls of his Word and Miniſters*; he ſtill endeavours to recover us to pardon, by recalling us to repentance. Yea the holy Spirit it ſelf makes freſh aſſaults upon us, and tries again whether we will hearken to it, and be relieved by it; as it was with *David* after he had complained of his being *deprived of Gods preſence*, and of the *holy Spirit's being taken from him*, Pſal. 51. 11; and as it is with every other *reclaimed backſlider*.

The ſinning againſt the *holy Ghoſt* therefore in this ſenſe, as it ſignifies the *ordinary gifts and graces of the holy Ghoſt*, is far from being the unpardonable ſin, and is manifeſtly under the grace of pardon and repentance.

Secondly, Nor is a ſin againſt the *extraordinary gifts* of *caſting out Devils*, *healing diſeaſes*, *working miracles*, or other things called the *Spirit*, that *unpardonable* ſin which is here intended. To *blaſpheme the Spirit*, 'tis true, comes very near it, and when men are once gone on to that, God is very nigh giving of them up, and uſing no more means about them, to bring them either to *Faith*, or *Repentance*, which are the only way to pardon and forgiveneſs. But although this pitch of ſin be extreme dangerous, yet, in great likelihood, it is not wholly deſperate; for after all the dirt that men had thrown upon this evidence, *viz.* the *miraculous operation wrought by Chriſt whilſt he continued upon earth*, God was ſtill pleaſed to uſe ſome means further to bring them to belive; and that was, the evidence of the *holy Ghoſt*, which came down to compleat all after that *Jeſus* was *glorified*, Act. 2. This great proof, which was to be poured out upon the Diſciples at *Pentecoſt*, and upon other Chriſtians at the Impoſition of their hands for a good while after, might effect that wherein the other had

had failed, and be acknowledged by thoſe very men, who had blaſphemed the former. So that their caſe, notwithſtanding it were gone extreme far, was not for all that quite hopeleſs, becauſe one remedy ſtill remained which God reſolved he would uſe to reclaim them, though after that he would try no more. The blaſpheming of the Spirit then was very near the unpardonable, becauſe unamendable, ſin, but yet it was not fully grown up to it; it was in the next degree to unpardonable, but yet, if it went no further, it might be pardoned ſtill.

And of this I think we have a clear proof, even in thoſe *blaſphemous Phariſees*, whoſe *reviling of the Spirit* was the occaſion of all this diſcourſe. For, as for the *Spirit*, they blaſphemed it in this very Chapter, when upon occaſion of the *miraculous cure of the man with the withered hand*, v. 13; and of *Chriſts caſting out of Devils*, v. 28; both which were ſo manifeſtly wrought before their eyes, that none of them durſt queſtion, or deny the working of them; they go blaſphemouſly to charge theſe evident effects of the *Spirit* upon the power of *Magick*, and to ſay that theſe works of *God* were performed by the *Devil*. For when theſe mighty effects of the Spirit were urged to them in behalf of *Jeſus*, *they anſwered and ſaid*, ſays Saint *Matthew*, *this Fellow doth not caſt out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils*, v. 24. Here is a reproach to theſe miraculous gifts of the Spirit, as great as can be invented; for it is nothing leſs, than an attributing them to the moſt foul and loathſom Fiends in Nature, even to the very Devils themſelves. But yet this Blaſphemy, as dangerous as it was, is not utterly unpardonable and hopeleſs. For our Lord himſelf, in this very *Chapter*, encourages their hopes, by giving them a promiſe, that ſome further means ſhould be ſtill uſed to cure their Infi-

Infidelity, after that they had blaſphemed this; telling theſe very men, that the *ſign of his Death and Reſurrection*, with the other evidences of the Holy Ghoſt which were to enſue upon it, ſhould be a further argument to ſatisfie them in what they inquired after, *viz. his being the Meſſiah, or the Son of God.* For *when certain of the Phariſees*, preſently upon his finiſhing this Diſcourſe of their Blaſpheming of the Holy Spirit, *v.* 37, *made Anſwer to him ſaying, Maſter, we would ſee a ſign from thee* to confirm to us the truth of that pretenſion: *he anſwered*, as St. *Matthew* goes on, *an evil and an Adulterous Generation ſeeketh a ſign, and there ſhall no* further *ſign be given it, but* only *the ſign of the Prophet Jonas*, and that indeed ſhall. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whales Belly*, and was afterwards deliver'd out of it to go and preach to the *Ninevites: ſo ſhall the ſon of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*, and after that riſe again, to preach by his Apoſtles to you, and all the world, ſending to you, for a further evidence ſtill, the Holy Ghoſt, *v.* 38. 39. 40.

So that as for this *blaſphemy of the ſpirit*, wherewith the Phariſees reviled it, it was not utterly unpardonable, but was ſtill within the poſſibility of pardon. For after they had committed it, Chriſt promiſed them a further argument in his Reſurrection, after the Example of *Jonas*, which ſhould be a new ſign added to all that they had already ſeen, to gain them over to faith or belief, and thereby to pardon and forgiveneſs; every ſin being pardonable to him that believeth.

And this pardonableneſs of *blaſpheming of the ſpirit*, our Lord further intimates in that very place, by a wary change of the phraſe when he comes to ſpeak of the unpardonableneſs of it; calling the unpardonable blaſphemy, not a *blaſphemy againſt the ſpirit*, (although it was the Spirit which was indeed blaſphemed, *v.* 24; and

and whereof he had juſt made mention, *v.* 28;) but a *blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which being as S. *John* ſays, * *not yet given*, could not yet be blaſphemed, *v.* 31, 32.

* John 7.39.

But

Thirdly, The deſperate and unpardonable ſin here mentioned, which ſhall *never be forgiven neither in this world, nor in that which is to come*, is a ſin againſt the *laſt* and *greateſt evidence* of all, *viz.* the *gift of tongues*, of *Prophecy*, and of other things called the *Holy Ghoſt*. In all the other evidence that came before to win men to a belief of Chriſt's Religion, which is the only means of pardon to the World; God had ſtill a reſerve, and reſolved upon ſome further courſe if they proved ineffectual. If the *teſtimony of John Baptiſt to Chriſt's being the Lamb of God*, if the *meſſage of an Angel at his conception*, the *Star at his birth*, and the *Quire of Angels at his entrance into the World*; if the *innocency of his life*, the *wiſdom of his words*, and the *mightineſs of his wonders* in *commanding the winds and ſeas*, in *curing diſeaſes*, in *caſting out Devils*, in *reſtoring the weak to ſtrength*, and the *dead to life*; if all theſe prove unſucceſsful, and unable to perſwade an *Infidel*, and *perverſe Generation*: yet ſtill God reſolves to try one means more, which before that time the World never ſaw nor heard of, and that is the *ample and moſt full effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles at Pentecoſt, and upon others at the impoſition of their hands for a long time after*. This further evidence ſhall ſtill be given to ſubdue the ſtubbornneſs of mens unbelief, which had proved too hard for all the former. When I am departed from you, ſays our Saviour to his Apoſtles, *I will ſend* the Holy Ghoſt, who is *the Comforter* or * Advocate, *unto you*. And when he is come, he ſhall plead my Cauſe more convincingly, than the operations of the Spirit have done

* παράκλητον.

done hitherto. For *he ſhall reprove* and * convince *the world*, and thoſe who remained Infidels after they had ſeen all the evidence of the Spirit, *of* their own *ſin in not believing on me*, and *of* my *righteouſneſs* and truth in ſaying I am the *Meſſiah*, *becauſe* he ſhall ſhew that *I* am owned above, and *am gone to my Father*, whence I have ſent him down ſo plentifully upon you, *John* 16. 8, 9, 10. But when once God had given this proof, he had done all that he deſigned: for this is the laſt remedy which he had decreed to make uſe of, to cure the infidelity of an unbelieving Age. So that if men ſhall uſe it, as they have done all that went before; and if inſtead of being perſwaded by it, they ſhall proceed, not only to *ſleight* and *deſpiſe*, but, what is more, to *revile* and *blaſpheme* it, as they have already done with the Spirit; then is the irreverſible Decree gone out againſt them, and God is unalterably reſolved to ſtrive no more with them, but to let them die in their unbelief. If they ſhould be won by it indeed, and believe upon it; be their former offences what they will, no leſs than a blaſpheming of the Spirit, yet may they juſtly expect to be pardoned. For the offer of Grace is univerſal, *Whoſoever believes and is baptized ſhall be ſaved*, Mark 16. 16: and what our Saviour ſpoke in the caſe of Miracles, is true alſo in point of mercy and forgiveneſs, *viz.* that *nothing is impoſſible to him that believeth*, Mark 9. 23. But when once men have gone ſo far as to be guilty of it, their ſin is unpardonable, becauſe their Faith is impoſſible. For they have rejected all the evidence, which any man can urge for their conviction: ſeeing they have deſpiſed all that, which God has offered. Their infidelity is ſtronger than can be cured, by any Argument that Chriſt either has, or will afford to prevail over it; ſo

* ἐλέγξει.

that they muſt die in their ſin, and there is no hope for them.

Indeed if God ſo pleaſe, there is no queſtion but that, after they have once blaſphemed it, he *can* ſtill ſo melt and ſoften, faſhion and prepare their minds, that afterwards they ſhall hearken to the incomparable evidence of the Spirit and the Holy Ghoſt, which, to any honeſt mind, are irreſiſtable. But this ſin is of ſo provoking a nature, that, when once they are guilty of it, he *will* not. He has paſt an irreverſible Decree upon them, never more to meddle with them; ſo that they never will be pardoned, becauſe as things ſtand they never will be reclaimed. Which is the very reaſon, which the Apoſtle himſelf gives of the deſperate ſtate of *Apoſtate* Chriſtians. For by renouncing of that Faith, which, upon the evidence both of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghoſt, they had been before convinced of; *they deſpite*, ſays he, *the Spirit of Grace*, as it implies both the Spirit and the Holy Ghoſt too, ſo that as for them, *it is impoſſible to renew them again unto repentance*; that being ſuch a ſin, as God will never give repentance to, *Heb.* 6.6.

The ſinning againſt the Holy Ghoſt in this ſence, then, as it denotes the *gift of tongues*, of *prophecy*, &c. which is the laſt evidence that God is reſolved to make uſe of for the converſion of an unbelieving World, is that unpardonable ſin, which ſhall never be forgiven.

And yet even here, in this limited and contracted ſence of the word *Holy Ghoſt*, we muſt ſtill proceed with ſome caution. For it is not every *affront* and *diſhonour* that is put upon theſe gifts, which is the ſin here ſtyled irremiſſible. *Simon Magus* caſt a very high indignity, and reproach upon them in his *actions*: for he

went

went about to purchaſe the *gift of tongues*, and other *ſacred illuminations* called the *Holy Ghoſt*, which fell upon men at the impoſition of the Apoſtles hands, as if they had been only a trick to get mony, or a fit thing to drive a trade withal, and make a gainful merchandiſe. *When Simon ſaw, that through the laying on of the hands of the Apoſtles the Holy Ghoſt was given, he offered them money*, ſays St. *Luke*, *ſaying, Give me alſo this power, that on whomſoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts 8. 18, 19. This was a very great abuſe, and a moſt unworthy comparing of the heavenly and holy Spirit of God, to a mercetable ware, and ven'ib'e commodity; thinking it fit to ſerve any ends, and to miniſter to the baſeſt purpoſes of *filthy lucre* and *covetouſneſs*. But yet this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt in its ſtricteſt acceptation, was not the unpardonable ſin; it came very near it indeed, and would hardly be remitted; but ſtill in all likelihood, it was remiſſible. And therefore St. *Peter*, although he be very ſevere upon this ſordid man for the high affront, doth not yet pronounce an irreverſible doom of damnation upon him, but, on the contrary, exhorts him to repent, that the ſin of his heart may be forgiven. *Repent*, ſays he, *of this thy wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, V. 22.

But that which is the deſperately damning ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhall never be forgiven, either in this world, or in that which is to come; is the ſinning againſt it, not by *interpretation* only in our *actions*, but *directly in our words and expreſſions*. It is our *ſpeaking reproachfully* and *ſlanderouſly of it*, as the *Phariſees* did of the *ſpirit* when they attributed it to *Beelzebub*. And therefore it is expreſly

called the *ſpeaking blaſphemouſly* againſt the Holy Ghoſt. *Whoſoever ſpeaketh* * blaſphemouſly *againſt the Holy Ghoſt* when he ſhall come, *it ſhall never be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come*, Matth. 12. 31, 32. The great weight lies in that, for this heavy doom he denounced upon them, ſays S. *Mark, becauſe they SAID he had an unclean ſpirit*, Mark 3. 30.

* Βλασφημία πνεύματος.

And thus at length we ſee what that ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is, whoſe doom is ſo dreadful, and whoſe caſe is ſo deſperate under the Goſpel. It is nothing leſs than a *ſlandering and reviling*, inſtead of owning and aſſenting to *that laſt evidence, which God has given us of the truth of the Goſpel, in the gifts of tongues, prophecy, and other extraordinary illuminations called the Holy Ghoſt*. So that no man, who *owns Chriſt's Religion*, and thinks he was no *Impoſtor*, and believes that theſe *miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghoſt* were no *magical ſhows, or diabolical deluſions*, can ever be guilty of it. No, before he arrive to that, he muſt not only be an *Infidel to the faith*, but alſo a *Blaſphemer of it*; he muſt not only disbelieve this laſt and greateſt evidence, but diſparage and rail againſt it. If then there be any man, who *owns Chriſt's Authority*, and *obeys his Laws*, and *believes his Goſpel*, and *hopes in his promiſes*, and *fears its threatnings*, and expects that every word of that Covenant, which was confirmed to us by the infallible evidence of the Spirit and the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall come to paſs; he is not more guiltleſs of any ſin, than of this againſt the Holy Ghoſt; for he doth not ſo much as ſleight and diſparage, but owns and ſubmits to it.

If good men therefore are afraid, by reaſon of the irremiſſibleneſs of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; they fear where they need not, and their ſcruple is utterly unreaſonable and groundleſs, For let it be as unpardonable as it will, that ſhall not hurt them; for they can never ſuffer by it, ſince, whilſt they continue ſuch as now they are, they cannot poſſibly be guilty of it, or of any thing that comes near it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Concluſion.

The CONTENTS.

Some other cauſleſs ſcruples. The point of growth in Grace more largely ſtated. A ſummary repetition of this whole Diſcourſe. They may die with courage, whoſe Conſcience doth not accuſe them. This accuſation muſt not be for idle words, diſtractions in Prayer, &c. but for a wilful tranſgreſſion of ſome Law of Piety, Sobriety, &c. above mentioned. It muſt further be particular and expreſs, not general and roving. If an honeſt mans heart condemn him not for ſome ſuch unrepented ſins, God never will.

BEſides theſe ſcruples already mentioned, ſome good minds may be put in fear, and doubt of the ſafety of their preſent ſtate, becauſe S. *John* ſays, that *whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not*, being no longer a *child of God* if he do, 1 *Joh.* 3 6,9.

But the ſin here ſpoken of, as was obſerved * above, is defined by S. *John* himſelf at the fourth verſe of this Chapter, to be not every deviation or *going beſide the Law*, but *a wilful tranſgreſſion* and † *rejecting of the Law it ſelf.* And this indeed is inconſiſtent with a regenerate ſtate, and puts us out of Gods favour, making us liable to eternal deſtruction. But then the caſe for theſe ſins is not deſperate, ſeeing, if once we forſake them, and repent of them, we are as ſafe again as ever we were before we committed them. For our repentance will ſet us ſtraight; and if we tranſgreſs not wilfully

* Book 4. Chap. 2.

† ἀνομία.

fully again, we are without the reach of condemnation.

Others doubt, whether, when once they have wilfully ſinned, they ever can repent, or ſhall afterwards be pardoned, becauſe they read of *Eſau*, that after he had ſold his *birth-right* with the bleſſing that attended it, *when he would have inherited it afterwards he was rejected*, and *found no place* of a * change of mind or *repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears*, Heb. 12. 17. * μετανοίας.

In anſwer to this it will be ſufficient to obſerve, that this change of mind or repentance, which *Eſau* ſought, but could not find, was not in *himſelf*, but in his Father *Iſaac*.

It was not in *himſelf*, I ſay, for there he did find a place for it, being he was really poſſeſſed of it. For he was heartily ſorry for his former folly in parting with his *birth right*, and for his preſent unhappineſs in being cozen'd of his Father *Iſaacs bleſſing*; and he ſought to have them reverſt with bitter crys and importunate deſires, and much unfeigned intreaties; which clearly ſhow that *Eſaus* own mind was changed abundantly.

But that repentance, or change of mind in reverſing of the bleſſing, for which he laboured hard, but without effect, was in his Father *Iſaac*. The good Old man had already pronounced the bleſſing upon *Jacob*, and when *Eſau* moſt earneſtly intreated him to reverſe it, he told him flatly he would not: *I have bleſſed him*, ſaith he, *yea and he ſhall be bleſſed*, Gen. 27. 33. For the ſtory, as it is there recited, is plainly this. When *Iſaac* bid his Son *Eſau* provide him ſome Veniſon, that he might eat thereof, and bleſs him before he died: *Jacob*, by the counſel and aſſiſtance of his Mother *Rebecca*, counterfeited both the perſon and the Veniſon of *Eſau*, and going in therewith to his Father before

Eſau

Eſau returned, craftily ſtole away the bleſſing from him. And when *Eſau* came in afterwards to receive the bleſſing which *Iſaac* his Father had promiſed him, he tells him that *Jacob* his Brother had come with ſubtilty before him, and, under a crafty diſguiſe, had taken
Verſ. 37. it away from him. For *I have made him thy Lord*, ſaith he, *and all his Brethren have I given to him for ſervants*. And although *Eſau* intreated his Father to
v. 34, 38. reverſe it, and *cryed*, as it is there ſaid, *with a great and exceeding bitter cry*; yet *Iſaac* would not change
33. his mind, or alter what he had pronounced: *I have bleſſed him*, ſaith he, *yea and he ſhall be bleſſed*. This reverſion of the bleſſing, and repentance or change of mind in his Father *Iſaac*, was that which *Eſau* endeavoured after, and which as S. *Paul* here ſays, *he ſought carefully with tears*. But, as he obſerves out of this ſtory, all was in vain, for it would not be granted him. When he ſought to *inherit the bleſſing*, his ſuit was not granted, but *rejected*; for *Iſaacs* Decree was paſt, and *he found no place of repentance*, or way to make him change
† αὐτήν. his mind; *although he ſought* that † change *carefully with tears*.

In this place then, the Apoſtle ſays not at all that it *was impoſſible for* Eſau *to repent of his ſins againſt God*, or that *God would not forgive him upon his repentance*: but only that *Iſaac would not repent of his decree*, or reverſe that bleſſing which he had pronounced upon *Jacob*. Which inflexibleneſs of *Iſaac*, he doth indeed make uſe of in theſe verſes, to illuſtrate Gods inexorableneſs towards ſome ſinners; but then thoſe are not all *wilful ſinners* indifferently, but only *Apoſtates*, who have wilfully renounced their Chriſtianity, which, as we have ſeen before, is a ſin that God will afford no more grace, or place of repentance to. And this, as I take it, appears plainly from the foregoing verſes.

Take

Take care, says he, *lest that which is lame*, or the weak Christian, *be turned out of the way* of his Christian profession through fears of Persecution, v 13; *Look diligently lest any man fail*, or fall from *the Grace* or Gospel *of God*, v. 15; which I exhort you the more earnestly to do, because if any man doth reject all those Gospel-blessings and priviledges, which in that Religion which you have received are now offered to him, and apostatize from them; God will never afford him the tender of them again, but will be as unalterable in his Decree against him, as *Isaac* was in his against *Esau*, who, as you know from the story, after once he had mist of the *blessing*, *found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears*, v. 17.

Others again are troubled in mind, and are afraid lest their Souls are yet in danger, because they do not perceive themselves *to grow in grace*, and *to be increased in goodness*. They complain that their *spiritual life* is at a stand, and that they are not more *devout* and *piously affected*, more *vertuous* and better *Christians*, than they were for some considerable time before. And this makes them jealous, lest they should pass for *idle servants*, who have not used and improved their *Talents*, and who shall be dealt with at the last Day as if they had abused them.

To speak clearly to this business, and yet to be as brief as conveniently I can, it is *first* observable, that to *grow in grace*, is the same thing as to *grow in vertue and goodness*, or to *go on to higher measures of life and perfection in any, or in all the instances of duty and obedience*. For an obedient life, as I have largely shewn, is that sole instance and proof of *grace*, which can render any of us acceptable in Gods sight, and whereupon the Gospel encourages us to hope for pardon and a happy Sentence at the last Judgment. So that if any

mans *life* is more *perfect* than it was, if he grows in *doing good*, and *keeping back from evil*, and goes on higher ſtill in *performing all Gods Commandments*; if he begins to have a greater *honour for God*, to be more *careful to pleaſe*, and more *afraid to offend* him; if he is more forward to *depend upon his Providence*, to *truſt in his Promiſes*, to *reſign himſelf up to his Will*, and to *ſubmit to his pleaſure*, to *praiſe him for all his Excellencies* and *Diſpoſals*, and to *perform all his Precepts*: if he is more *humble* and *heavenly-minded*, *chaſt* and *temperate*, *juſt* and *charitable*; if he is more *meek* and *gentle*, *courteous* and *affable*, *quiet* and *peaceable*, more ready to *repair wrongs*, and to *forgive injuries* than formerly: if he thus advances to *higher meaſures*, to *greater eaſe*, or to *more conſtancy*, and *evenneſs of obedience*, in *any*, or in *all inſtances of Duty* towards *God* and *men*, and that in *all relations*; his vertue is in its *ſpring*, and is ſtill going on; he *grows in grace*, and God will accordingly reward him.

One *particular* Vertue there is, which men are wont to look at more eſpecially in this matter, and that is *Prayer*. They meaſure their growth in grace by their improvement in this, and think their *ſpiritual life* is then *moſt perfect*, when their *Devotions are moſt inlarged*. Which they conclude they are, not when they are put up with the greateſt *truſt* and *dependance*, *ſubmiſſion* and *reſignedneſs to God Almighty*, or with any other of thoſe *obedient tempers* implied in Prayer, which are apt to influence our *whole lives*: but when they are accompanied with the moſt *ſenſible joys*, and *raviſhing tranſports*, and *unuſual height of fervency* and *affection*. So that if at any time they can *pray* more *paſſionately*, and put forth more *intenſe deſires*, and work themſelves up to more *heavenly raptures*, than ordinarily they have been able to attain to; they fancy that they do indeed

indeed grow in grace, and are become higher in Gods favour and acceptance. But if ever this ſervice happens to be more *irkſom* to them, and they diſcharge it with much *backwardneſs* and *wearineſs*, *dulneſs* and *indifference*; they think God frowns upon them, and has deſerted them, and that their grace is in a declining ſtate, and ſinking down to nothing.

But this is a very *uncertain* and *dangerous* mark for any man in this caſe to judge by, and will very often deceive him that builds upon it. For theſe fervent heats, and delightſom tranſports of Devotion, are not ſo much a *duty* as a *priviledge*, which all tempers cannot attain to, but only thoſe that are naturally diſpoſed for it: ſo that a growth in them, is not a growth in *ſaving grace*, but rather in *ſenſible joy* and *happineſs*, and renders us, not ſo truly gracious in Gods eyes, as happy in our own. Beſides, as an improvement in theſe religious and pleaſing raptures is not a growth in grace it ſelf, ſo neither is it always *joined with it*, and therefore no ſure argument can be deduced from it. For 'tis eaſily obſervable, that ſeveral perſons of *devotional tempers*, who are uſually raiſed up to a high pitch, and raviſhed with moſt delightſom tranſports in their Prayers; are yet very *dangerouſly defective in many inſtances of neceſſary Duty* and a *holy life*. They fall oft times, even whilſt they enjoy their bliſsful heats and heavenly raptures of Devotion, into damning acts of *fraud* and *injuſtice*, *anger* and *malice*, *ſtrife* and *variance*, *fierceneſs* and *revenge*: they live in them, and are habitually inſlaved to them, and yet, for all that they find no want of this delight in prayer, nor any abatement of their devout intenſeneſs of mind, and earneſt fervour of affection ſtill. But now theſe men being ſo *maimed* and *partial* in their ſervice, and having no *entire obedience* to confide in; they have not grace enough, as

* Book 3. manifeſtly appears from what has been * ſaid upon that point, to bear them out, nor ſo much vertue, as God has indiſpenſably required to ſave them.

As for theſe qualifications of our Prayers then, thoſe *ſenſible joys*, and *paſſionate tranſports* which accompany them; they are no inſtance of obedience and ſaving grace themſelves, nor any certain argument that thoſe perſons are endowed with it, who are allowed to enjoy them. They are oft times found in ill men, who, ſo long as they reſt there and grow no better, cannot go to Heaven.

And then as for the other more acceptable and obedient tempers of our prayers, ſuch as *truſt* and *dependance*, *ſubmiſſion* and *reſignedneſs*, &c. which the men of *ſober devotion* moſt juſtly prefer before the former, as uſually moſt *others* do, when once their *religious heats* are over: though a growth in them is truly a growth in grace, yet a growth in them *alone* is not enough to ſave us. They indeed in *themſelves* are ſo many particular inſtances of obedience, and beſides that, they are alſo *great means* and proper inſtruments to produce others: ſo that our growth in them is a growth in ſome particular Graces, and a very likely way to grow in others alſo. But ſtill we muſt remember, that they are but *one part of ſaving Grace*, and by no means the *whole*; ſo that till we are grown in others too, we cannot hope to be ſaved by them. They are ſome inſtances of vertue, and a growth in them is in part a growth in grace: but a growth in them alone, or in any other particular vertues whatſoever, except we are grown up to a ſaving pitch in all the reſt, and are come up to an entire obedience, is not enough to ſerve our turn. For this is the indiſpenſable condition of the Chriſtian Religion, and is the † *perfect man*, and *juſt ſtature* in the Chriſtian Faith; that we be grown up to an *habitual*

† Eph. 4. 13.

habitual obedience in all our voluntary and *chosen actions*, not only to *some few*, but to *all the parts of Duty*, and *the Laws of God.*

But if we would single out some *one*, or some *few Vertues*, from our growth and improvement wherein we may justly presume that we have attained to *saving degrees in all the rest*: S. *James* directs us to the *duties of the tongue*, in abstaining from *back-biting*, *censuring* and *evil speaking*, &c. which, under all the *invitations of conversation*, and the *temptations of common life*, is usually the last point which good men gain, and that wherein * they, who scarce ever sin *wilfully* at *all*, or very *rarely*, are wont most frequently, through *indeliberation* and *inadvisedness*, to miscarry. *If any man*, saith he, *offendeth not in word*, but has attained to an innocent, and obedient guidance of his tongue; *that same* man need not be defective in other duties, he *is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body*, James 3. 2.

* Ecclus 19. 16. *and* 14. 1.

Thus is mens growth in *saving Grace*, not a growth only in some *one*, or in some *few vertues*; but in an *universal* and *entire obedience*. And this every Christian is bound incessantly to endeavour after. The longer he lives, the higher improvement ought he to make, and to attain every vertue in a larger measure, and in greater firmness and perfection, than he had before. *Grow in grace*, says S. *Peter*, *and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Forgetting those things which are behind* me, and already attained, says S. *Paul*, *and reaching out after those things which are* still *before me*, *I press on forward towards the mark*, that I may acquire a more compleat growth than yet I have. And *let as many* among you *as be perfect, be thus minded*, Phil. 3. 13, 14.

Thus are all good Christians bound to advance still further

further in a virtuous courſe, and the longer they live, to be ſtill more *uniform* and *conſtant*, *firm* and *perfect*, *in all inſtances of obedience* and a *holy life*. But then this obligation is not always laid upon them under the *forfeiture of Heaven*, but, when once they have attained ſo far as is indiſpenſably neceſſary to their acceptance, only of ſome *higher rewards*, and *greater degrees of happineſs*, which are *to be enjoyed there*. For there are different degrees in happineſs, anſwerable to the different meaſures in mens obedience: they that *perform moſt*, ſhall be *rewarded higheſt*; but they who *perform no more than is indiſpenſably required*, although they miſs of that acceſſion of reward, which by the grace of the Goſpel is due to an eminent height of obedient endeavours, ſhall yet obtain the *pardon of their ſins*, and a *ſtate of joy* and *bleſſedneſs in Heaven*, as well as they who have endeavoured and performed more. An *entire obedience in all choſen actions*, and a *particular repentance and amendment of all thoſe ſins wherein at any time we have wilfully diſobeyed God*, is ſufficient, as has been ſhown, to ſecure the happineſs of the next life. According as we have attained to greater or leſſer perfection in it, ſo ſhall the degrees of our reward there be proportioned; but if we have arrived to it at all, we have as much to ſhow as is juſt neceſſary. And therefore whilſt we are yet in the more imperfect meaſures of it, and only thirſt after a more perfect obedience, that we may ſtill be more acceptable to God, and have right to a more noble and excellent reward; we are in a ſafe ſtate, and have no need to diſquiet our Souls with fears and jealouſies, leſt they ſhould eternally miſcarry.

If any perſon then has uſed Gods Grace, and improved his Talents to this meaſure, he has not been unprofitable and uſeleſs, but has profited ſo far as is neceſſary to his happineſs. He is bound indeed ſtill to advance

advance higher, and in every inſtance of Vertue to improve further; but this he is, not under the loſs of Heaven, but only under the danger of falling back into ſuch a ſtate of ſin, as would deſtroy the hopes of it again, and the forfeiture of greater glory and rewards there. When an intire obedience in all choſen inſtances, and a particular reformation and repentance of all wilful ſins, is once ſecured; there is ſo much growth in grace, as is abſolutely neceſſary: an exalted pitch and compleat meaſures of this obedience, with more *eaſe* and *pleaſure*, *conſtancy* and *evenneſs*, with *leſs mixture of voluntary ſins* which need particular repentance, and with a *greater freedom from innocent and unwilled infirmities*, is neceſſary to more abſolute degrees, and greater hights of glory; but, till that can be had, this is ſufficient to a mans ſalvation.

Several other ſcruples there are, which are wont to diſquiet and perplex the minds of good and honeſt people, who are ſafe in Gods account, although their Caſe ſeems never ſo hazardous in their own. And of this ſort are their fears that their *obedience is unſincere*, becauſe they have an *eye at their own good*, and a reſpect to their own ſafety; ſince they ſerve God in hopes to be better by him, and out of a fear, ſhould they diſobey, of ſuffering evil from him. They are afraid alſo that it is defective in a main Point, for they cannot *love* and *ſerve* him in that comprehenſive latitude which the Commandment requires, *viz. With all their heart, and with all their ſoul, and with all their mind.* They doubt they are *paſt Grace and Pardon*, becauſe they have *ſinned after that they have been enlightned*, and that *wilfully*; and the Apoſtle affirms that *for ſuch there remains no more Sacrifice for ſins*, Heb. 10. 26. Theſe doubts are ſtill apt to diſturb their peace, and make ſad their hearts; and ſome others of like nature.

But

But of theſe, and ſeveral others, I have given ſufficient Accounts above; ſuch as, I hope, may ſatisfie any reaſonable man, who is capable to read, and to conſider of them; and thither I refer the Reader, not thinking fit here to repeat them.

And thus at laſt we have ſeen, when an *honeſt* and *entire obedience* is taken care for in the firſt place, how plainly *groundleſs* thoſe fears are, which are wont to perplex the thoughts of good and ſafe, yet ignorant and miſguided people, about their ſtate of happineſs and ſalvation.

And now I have done with all thoſe points, which I thought neceſſary to be enquired into, to the end that I might ſhew every man now before-hand how he ſtands prepared for the next world, and which, at the beginning of this whole Diſcourſe, I propoſed to treat of. I have ſhown what *that condition is of bliſs or miſery, which the Goſpel indiſpenſably exacts of us*, and that, as I take it, ſo particularly, that no man, who will be at the pains to read and conſider of it, can overlook or miſtake it; what *thoſe defects are, which it bears and diſpenſeth with*; what *thoſe remedies* and *means of reconciliation are, which it has provided for us*; and, when all theſe are taken care for, how *groundleſs all thoſe other ſcruples are*, which are wont to diſquiet honeſt minds about the goodneſs of their preſent ſtate, and their title to eternal ſalvation.

And upon the whole matter the ſum of all amounts to this, that when *Chriſt* ſhall come to *ſit in judgment at the laſt day*, and to paſs ſentence of life or death upon every man according to the direction of his Goſpel, he will pronounce upon *every man according to his works*. If he has *honeſtly* and *entirely obey'd* the whole will of God in all the particular Laws before mention'd, *never wilfully and deliberately offending in any one inſtance*, nor

in-

indulging himself in the practice of any thing which he knows to be a sin; he is safe in the Accounts of the last Judgement, and shall never come into Condemnation. Nay if he has been a *damnable offender*, and has *wilfully transgressed*, either in *one* instance, or in *many*; in *frequent* repetitions of his sin, or in *few*; yet if he *repent of it before death seize him*, and *amend it ere he is haled away to Judgment*; he is *safe* still. For he shall be judged according as his works then are, when God comes to enquire of them; so that if ever he be found in an honest obedience, observing every thing which he sees to be his duty, and wilfully venturing upon nothing which his Conscience tells him is sinful; he is found in the state of Grace and Pardon, and, if he die in it, he shall be saved. All his *unwill'd ignorances* and *innocent unadvisednesses*, *upon his Prayers for pardon*, and his *mercifulness and forgiveness of other men*, shall be abated; all his other *causes of fear* and *scruple*, *shall be overlooked*; they shall not be brought against him to his Condemnation, but in the honest and entire obedience, which he hath performed, in that shall he live.

If then we have an *honest heart*, and walk so, as our *own Conscience* has nothing whereof to accuse us; we may meet Death with a good Courage, and go out of the World with comfortable Expectations. For if we have an honest and a tender heart, whensoever we sin wilfully and against our Consciences, our own Souls will be our Remembrancers. They will be a witness against us, both whilst we are in this World, and after we are taken out of it, and brought to Judgment. *Mens Consciences*, says the Apostle, *shall accuse or excuse them, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel*, Rom. 2. 15.

Indeed, if men have *harden'd their hearts in wickedness*, and sin'd themselves out of the belief of their

duty, having come to call *evil*, *good*; and *good*, *evil*: then their Conſciences having no further ſenſe of ſin, will have no accuſations upon it. But if they really believe the Goſpel, and ſtudy to know their duty, and deſire to obſerve it, and are afraid to offend in any thing which they ſee is ſinful; whilſt thus their heart is ſoft, and their Conſcience tender, they cannot venture upon any ſin with open Eyes, but that their own hearts will both check them before, and ſmite them afterwards. They will have a witneſs againſt them in their own boſoms, which will ſcourge and awake them, ſo that they cannot approach death without a ſenſe of their ſin, nor go out of the World without diſcerning themſelves to be guilty.

If our own Conſcience then cannot accuſe us of the wilful and preſumptuous breach of any of Gods Commandments, and we know of none but what we have repented of; we have juſt reaſon to take a good heart to our ſelves, and to wait for death in hopeful expectations. *If our own* * *hearts condemn us not*, ſays S. *John*, *then have we confidence towards God*, 1 John 3. 21. There is no ſin that will damn us but a wilful one, and when we ſin wilfully, if our heart is ſoft and honeſt, we ſin wittingly and againſt our Conſcience; our own heart ſees and obſerves it before, and will keep us in mind of it after we have committed it. So that if any man has a vertuous and a tender heart, a heart that is truly deſirous to obey God, and afraid in any thing to offend him; when his Conſcience is ſilent he may juſtly conclude that his Condition is ſafe, for if it doth not condemn him, God never will.

* 1 Pet. 3. 21.

An honeſt mans heart, I ſay, muſt condem him, before he have ſufficient reaſon to condemn himſelf. And that too, not for every *idle word*, or every *fruitleſs luſt*, or every *dulneſs of ſpirit*, and *diſtraction in prayer*, and *cold-*

coldneſs in devotion, or ſuch other *miſtaken marks*, whereby too many are wont to judge of their title to ſalvation. No, Heaven and Hell are not made to depend upon theſe things, but although a man be guilty of them, he may be eternally happy notwithſtanding them. But that accuſation of his Conſcience, which may give an honeſt man juſt reaſon to condemn himſelf, muſt be an accuſation for a *wilful breach*, or *deliberate*, and yet *unamended*, *tranſgreſſion*, of ſome particular Law of *Sobriety*, *Piety*, *Juſtice*, *Charity*, *Peaceableneſs*; it muſt accuſe him of an unrepented breach of ſome of thoſe Laws above mentioned, which God has plainly made the terms of life, and the condition of ſalvation.

And the accuſation for the breach of theſe Laws muſt be *particular*, and *expreſs*; not *general* and *roving*. For ſome are of ſo *ſuſpicious* and *timorous* a temper, that they are ſtill ſuſpecting and condemning of themſelves, when they know not for what reaſon. They will indict themſelves as men that have ſinned greatly, but they cannot ſhew wherein; they judge of themſelves, not from any *reaſon* or *experience*, but at a *venture*, and by *chance*; they ſpeak not ſo truly their *opinions*, as their *fears*; not what their *underſtandings* ſee and diſcern, but what their *melancholy* ſuggeſts to them. For ask them as to any one Particular of the Laws of God, and run them all over, and their Conſciences cannot charge them with any *wilful*, which is withal an *unrepented*, tranſgreſſion of it. But let them overlook all Particulars, and paſs a judgment of themſelves only in general, when they do not judge from particular inſtances, which are true evidence, but only from groundleſs and ſmall preſumptions; and then they paſs a hard ſentence upon themſelves, and conclude that their ſins are very great, and their condition dangerous.

But no man ſhall be ſentenced at the laſt Day for Notions and Generalities: but it is our particular ſins which muſt then condemn us. For God's Laws bind us all in ſingle actions; and if our own Conſciences cannot condemn us for any one wilful, which is withal an unrepented action; God will not condemn us for them altogether.

If our own heart therefore doth not accuſe us for the *particular*, *wilful*, and *unrepented breaches* of ſome or other of thoſe Laws above mentioned, which God has made the indiſpenſable condition of our acceptance; we are ſecure as to the next World, and may comfortably hope to be acquitted in the laſt Judgment. Being conſcious of no wilful ſin, but what we have repented of, and by mercy and forgiveneſs of other men, and our prayers to God, begging pardon for our involuntary ſins; we ſhall have nothing that will lie heavy upon us at the laſt Day, but may go out of the World with eaſe, and dye in comfort. Our departure hence may be in peace, becauſe our appearance at Gods Tribunal ſhall ſurely be in ſafety. For we ſhall have no worſe charged upon us there, than we are able here to charge upon our ſelves; but leaving this World in a good Conſcience, we ſhall be ſentenced in the next to a glorious reward; and bid to enter into our Maſters joy, there to live with our Lord for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Soli Deo Gloria.

FINIS.